THE VISVA-BHARATI QUARTERLY

Vol. III. APRIL, 1925 No. 1

THE VOICE OF HUMANITY.

Address given at Milan

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

Introductory Remarks by Prof. Formichi.

There is nobody but must realise the solemnity of this hour. A poet of world-wide reputation is here before us ; and among millions and millions of men of all continents, we few privileged people are enjoying the touch of his lofty personality. The world, the better part of the world, envies us to-day.

Master (this is the title that suits you best, for though you are, it is true, a poet above all, you are also a musician, a philosopher, a seer, a social reformer, an educator) Master ! we thank you for having come to Italy, where those who admire and love you are legion. They love you, —though you have not found out a new means of destruction to be resorted to in war, nor a new medicine to keep off death for the nonce, nor a new source of sensual enjoyment, nor a new way leading to a wider control over the forces of Nature ; they love you because you have founded in the heart of everyone of them an asylum of peace, a *Santiniketan ;* they love you because you have given them the spiritual joy of hearing, on God, on death, on life and love, your sublime thoughts expressed in sublime form.

Your time-honoured Rigveda says that language consists of four-fourths, all of which clever sages know well, but three-quarters of which they conceal and allow not to circulate, so that men speak only a fourth of the possible language :

Chatvári vák parimitá padáni
Táni vidur Bráhmaná ye manîsinah,
Guha trîni nihita nenyayanti
Turîyam vácho manusyá vadanti.

Far from following the example of those ancient seers, you have circulated among men the other three-quarters of language, and your words, worthiest expressions of the great mysteries, give us glimpses and intimations of immortality.

We do not expect that, like Krishna to Arjuna, you should reveal God sensibly to us, or that you should tell us the destiny of each one after death. Man is not and must not be allowed into the ultimate mystery of things. What he is expected to do is to approach as near as may be to that great mystery, with thoughts purified and strength drawn from the holiness of his own life. You have given us the example, and your song is the loftiest prayer that contemporary mankind can raise to the Highest.

Yours is not a mysticism irreconcilable with the acute sense of reality that we Western people inherit in our very blood ; it is not a message of renunciation, but rather an irresistible appeal to participate in the gifts, the allurements and the beauties of life ; to contribute, by means of the implement of Science, to the more and more rapid ascent of Civilisation.

I have read that to your Chinese friends in Burma you said : "My friends, never be afraid of life. Life must make its experiments, go through its mistakes. Don't try to keep yourselves secure from such blunders by remaining in your tombstones." You adore life, youth, work ; your message has been called a vernal one ; and it is a great piece of luck that the first Italian town to throw her doors open to you, is Milan, —full of life, never knowing weariness in work, ever raising her banner with enthusiasm for every great idea and deed.

Master, tell then to the Milanese your message of peace and of human brotherhood. We shall all listen to it as to the trumpet of a prophecy ; everyone of us, like the *udgátar* at the Soma sacrifice, exhorts you thus :

Asato má sad gamaya
Tamaso má jyotir gamaya
Mrtyor mámrtam gamaya.

Let me pass from falsehood to truth,
from darkness to light,
from death to immortality.

The Address.

My friends, I have been waiting for this moment. When Prof. Formichi asked me to tell him what would be my subject this evening, I said I did not know; for you must understand that I am not a speaker. I am nothing better than a poet. When I speak, I speak *with* my surroundings and not *to* my surroundings. Now that I see your kind faces, your silent voice has reached my heart, and my voice will blend with it. When the heart wishes to pay its debt, it must have some coin with the stamp of its own realm upon it,—and that is our mother tongue. But I do not know your beautiful language, neither do you know mine. Since, therefore, that medium cannot be used for the commerce of thought and sentiment between you and myself, I have reluctantly to use the English language, which is neither yours nor mine. Therefore at the outset I ask you to forgive me, —those of you who do not know this language, as also those of you who do,—because my English is a foreigner's English.

Now I know what I am going to speak to you about. It will be in answer to the question as to what was the urging that brought me to you across the sea. In our language we have the expression *jágrata devatá,* the Divinity which is fully awake. For the soul of the individual, the Divine is not everywhere and always active. Only where our consciousness is illumined with love, does God act through our spirit. The shrine of the wakeful Divinity is there where the atmosphere of faith and devotion has been created by the meeting of generations of true worshippers. So our pilgrims in India are attracted to those places where, according to them, the divine spirit is active through the religious life and work of devotees.

Sometime in 1912 I felt such desire to make my pilgrimage to the shrine of humanity, where the human mind was fully awake, with all its lamps lighted, there to meet face to face the Eternal in man. It had occurred to me that this present age was dominated by the European mind, only because that mind was fully awake. You all know how the spirit of great Asia is going through an age-long slumber in the depth of night, with only a

few lonely watchers to read the stars and wait for the sign of the rising sun across the darkness. So, I had this longing to come to Europe and see the human spirit in the full blaze of its power and beauty. Then it was that I took that voyage,—my voyage of pilgrimage to Europe,—leaving for the moment my own work at Santiniketan and the children I loved.

But this was not my first visit to Europe. In the year 1878, when I was a boy, barely seventeen, I was brought over by my brother to these shores. It will be difficult for you to realise what visions we had in the East, in those days, of this great continent of Europe. Though I was young and though my knowledge of English was very insufficient, yet I had heard of her great poets and her heroes, of the ideal Europe of literature, so full of the love of freedom and of humanity.

Italy was my first introduction to Europe. In those days the steamers stopped at Brindisi and I still remember, when we reached the port, it was midnight under a full moon. I came rushing up on deck from my bed, and shall never forget that marvellous scene, enveloped in the silent mystery of the moon-light,—the sight of Europe asleep, like a maiden dreaming of beauty and peace.

It was fortunate for me that Brindisi was a small town, a quiet place, not so aggressively different from the scenes to which I had been accustomed from my childhood. I felt sure that its heart was open to me, to welcome the boy poet, who though young was even in those days a dreamer. I was greatly elated as I left the steamer to pass the night in what I suppose in these days of progress would be termed a third-rate hotel, having no electric light or other conveniences. I felt that I was in the arms of this great mother Europe and my heart seemed to feel the the warmth of her breast.

The next day I woke, and with my brother and an Indian friend, wandered into an orchard close by, a garden of paradise which threatened no punishment against trespassers. Ah! what delight I had that morning in the limpid sun-light, in the

hospitality of leaf and fruit and flower. There was an Italian girl there, who reminded me of our Indian maidens, with eyes dark like bees, which have the power to explore the secret honey cells of love in the lotus of our hearts. (You know, with us the lotus is the emblem of the heart). She was a simple girl with a coloured kerchief round her head and a complexion not too white. That is, it was not a pallid lack of complexion. (I wish to be forgiven when I say that the complexion of whiteness is the complexion of the desert, not the complexion of life). Her's was like that of a bunch of grapes caressed by the warm kisses of the sun, the sun which had modulated the beauty of her face, giving it a tender bloom.

I need not dwell at length upon the feelings I experienced; it is enough to say that I was of the impressionable age of 17! I felt that I had come to a land of beauty, of repose and joy, which even at that time inspired my mind with the idea that one day I should claim its welcome for me.

With me it was a case of love at first sight; but for my companions it was but a fleeting moment, so that I was not free to stay, but had to continue the journey with my brother, who wanted me to hasten to my lessons in English. Being a truant by nature I had always refused to attend my classes, and thus having become a problem to my elders, they had decided to send me to England to learn under compulsion the language which, according to their notion, would give me the stamp of respectability.

England is a great country, and I pay my homage to the greatness of her people, but I must be excused if I did not appreciate it at the moment. For an Indian boy such as I was, left there alone in the depth of winter when the birds were silent and the sun so miserly with its gifts, the country seemed on every side like a visible spirit of rude refusal. I was homesick and extremely shy. I was frightened at the sombrely dressed people who stared at me. From my lodging house, facing Regent's Park, I would gaze with a feeling of bewilderment at its monotony of leaflessness, through the mists, the fogs, and the

drizzle. In a word, I was young,—too young to enter into the spirit of England at that time. I merely glanced at the surface of things with my distracted heart always yearning for its own nest across the sea.

After a few months' stay, I went back home to India. But I dare not here give a recital of my idle days, which followed, to those of you who are young, and for whom the example of a studiously strenuous life of usefulness would perhaps be more beneficial. I avoided all kinds of educational training that could give me any sort of standardised culture, stamped with a university degree. I dreamt, wrote verses, stories and plays, lived in solitude on the banks of the Ganges, and hardly knew anything of the movements and counter-movements of forces in the great world.

Whilst I was in the midst of my creative work, there came to me an inner message asking me to come out of my seclusion and seek life in the heart of the crowd. I knew not what I could do. I had a love for children, so that I called them round me, in order to rescue them from the dismal dungeons of the educational department, and find for them that atmosphere of sympathy and freedom which they needed most. I chose a beautiful and secluded spot where in collaboration with Mother Nature it was possible to bring up these boys in a spirit of wisdom and love.

While I was still busy doing service to children I do not know what possessed me all of a sudden. From some far away sky came to me a call of pilgrimage reminding me that we are all born pilgrims,—pilgrims of this green earth. A voice questioned me: "Have you been to the sacred shrine where Divinity reveals itself in the thoughts and dreams and deeds of Man?" I thought possibly it was in Europe where I must seek it, and know the full meaning of my birth as a human being in this world. And so for the second time I came to this continent.

But, meanwhile, I had grown up and learnt much of the history of man. I had sighed with the great poet Wordsworth

who became sad when he saw what man had done to man. We too have suffered at the hands of man,—not tigers and snakes, not elemental forces of nature, but human beings. Men are ever the greatest enemy of Man. I had felt and known it; all the same, there was a hope, deep in my heart, that I should find some place, some temple, where the immortal spirit of man dwelt hidden like the sun behind clouds.

Yet, when I arrived in the land of my quest, I could not stop the insistent question which kept troubling me with a sense of despair: "Why is it that Europe with all her power of mind is racked with unrest? How is it that she is overcome with such a whirlwind of suspicion and jealousy and greed? Why is it that her greatness itself offers a vast field for fiercely contending passions to have their devil-dance in the lurid light of conflagration?"

When I travelled from Italy to Calais I saw the beautiful scenery on both sides of the railway. These men, I thought, have the ability to love their soil; and what a great power is this love! How they have beautified and made fruitful the whole continent with heroic sacrifice! With the force of their love they have fully won their country for themselves, and this ever-active service of their devotion, for generations, has given rise in them to an irresistible power. For love is the highest human truth and truth gives fulness of life. The earth is overwhelmed by it, not because of man's covetousness, but because of this life-giving shower of heart and mind that he has poured around him. How he has struggled to eradicate the obstinate barrenness from the inert! How he has fought and defeated at every step the evil in everything that was hostile in his surroundings! Why then this dark misery lowering over Europe, why this widespread menace of doom in her sky?

Because the love for her own soil and children will no longer suffice for her. So long as destiny offered to her only a limited problem, Europe did more or less satisfactorily solve it. Her answer was patriotism, nationalism,—that is to say, love only for that and those to whom she happened to be related. Accord-

ing to the degree of truth in this love she has reaped her harvest of welfare. But to-day, through the help of science, the whole world has been given to her for a problem. How to answer it in the fulness of truth she has yet to learn. Because the problem has become vast, the wrong answer is fraught with immense danger.

A great truth has been laid bare to you, and according to your dealing with it, you will attain the fulfilment of your destiny. If you do not have the strength to accept it in the right spirit, your humanity will rapidly degenerate; your love of freedom, love of justice, love of truth, love of beauty, will wither at the root; and you will be rejected of God.

Do you not realise how a rigid ugliness is everywhere apparent,—in your cities, in your commerce, the same monotonous mask,—so that nowhere is there room for a living expression of the spirit? This is the creeping in of death, limb by limb, in the body of your civilisation.

Love can be patient. Beauty is moulded and matured by patience. Your great artists knew it in the days when they could gladly modulate all the riches of their leisure into some tiny detail of beauty. The greedy man can never do this. Factories are the triumph of ugliness, for no one has the patience to try to give them the touch of grace; and so, everywhere in God's world to-day, we are faced with what is called progress, a progress towards inhospitable ugliness, towards the eddy of a bottomless passion which is voracity. Can you call to mind any great voice speaking out of the human heart in these modern days?

We have no doubt reason to be proud of Science. We offer to Europe our homage in return for her gift of science, now bequeathed to posterity. Our sages have said : "The Infinite has to be known and realised. For man, the Infinite is the only true source of happiness." Europe has come face to face with the Infinite in the world of extension, the domain of external Nature.

I do not cry down the material world. I fully realise that this is the nurse and the cradle of the Spirit. By achieving the Infinite in the heart of the material world you have made this world more generous than it ever was. But merely coming to a rich fact does not give us the right to own it. The great Science which you have discovered still awaits your meriting. Through what you have gained outwardly you may become successful, but you may miss greatness in spite of the success.

Because you have strenuously cultivated your mind in Europe, because of your accuracy of observation and the development of your reasoning faculties, these discoveries you have undoubtedly deserved. But discoveries have to be realised by a complete humanity,—Knowing has to be brought under the control of Being,— before Truth can be fully honoured. But our Being, the fundamental reality in the human world, with which all other truths have to be brought into harmony at any cost, is not within the domain of Science. Truth when not properly treated turns back on us to destroy us. Your very science is thus becoming your destroyer.

If you have acquired a thunderbolt for yourself, you must earn the right arm of a god to be safe. You have failed to cultivate those qualities which would give you full sovereign right over science and therefore you have missed peace. You cry for peace, and only build another frightful machine, some new powerful combination. Quiet may be imposed by outside compulsion for a time, but Peace comes from the inner spirit, from the power of sympathy, the power of self-sacrifice,—not of organisation.

I have great faith in humanity. Like the sun it can be clouded, but never extinguished. I admit that at this time when the human races have met together as never before, the baser elements appear predominant. The powerful are exulting at the number of their victims. They take the name of science to cultivate the school-boy superstition that they have certain physical signs indicating their eternal right to rule, as the explosive force of the earthquake once might have claimed, with

enough of evidence, its never-ending sway over the destiny of this earth. But they in their turn will be disappointed.

Their's is the cry of a past that is already exhausted, a past that has thrived upon the exclusive spirit of national individualism which will no longer be able to keep the balance in its perpetual disharmony with its surroundings. Only those races will prosper who, for the sake of their own perfection and permanent safety, are ready to cultivate the spiritual magnanimity of mind that enables the soul of man to be realised in the heart of all races.

For men to come near to one another, and yet to continue to ignore the claims of humanity, is a sure process of suicide. We are waiting for the time when the spirit of the age will be incarnated in a complete human truth and the meeting of men will be translated into the Unity of Man.

I have come to your door seeking the voice of humanity, which must sound its solemn challenge and overcome the clamour of the greedy crowd of slave-drivers. Perhaps it is already being uttered in whispers behind closed doors, and will grow in volume till it bursts forth in a thundering cry of judgment, and the vulgar shout of brute force is silenced in awe.

TO ITALIA.

By RABINDRANATH.

I said to thee: "O Queen,
Like many other lovers, who have brought their gifts to thy feet,
I have come, as a lark at the gate of Dawn, only to sing to thee and then to go."
From thy window thou spakest to me through thy veil:
"Now it is winter, my sky is dark, my garden without flowers."

I said to thee: "O Queen,
I have brought my reed from the eastern shore
Waiting to play to the light of thy dark eyes,
Open to me thy veil."
Thou saidst in answer: "Go back, my impatient poet,
For I have not yet decked myself in colours.
In the sweet month of May,
When I sit on my flower throne, I shall ask thee to my side."

I said to thee: "O Queen,
My journey has borne rich fruit in thy words of hope.
Floated on the breeze of Spring the magic of thy call to me
Will burst in flowers in our far away forest.
I shall seek back my path to thy window
On some sunny day, drunken with the fragrance of roses and humming with bees' wings.
To-day, while I take my leave and go back, I sing:
"Victory to thee!"

DEVELOPMENT OF RELIGIOUS THOUGHT AMONG THE INDO-ARYANS.

By Prof. Sten Konow.

Introduction (*concluded*).

The Aryans have become the leaders of the civilisation and of the religious development of India. But, as we have already seen, they were not always settled in the country, having entered it as conquerors.

We do not know when this conquest took place. Indian scholars have sometimes been inclined to push it back into a very distant past, untold millenniums before the beginning of the Christian era. Thereby they have overlooked one certain fact, *viz* : that the Indian Aryans are derived from the same common stock as most European nations, and that the history of none of them can with certainty be referred to an earlier period than say about 2,000 years B. C.

The prevailing theory in Europe has gone to the other extreme and tried to fix a low limit, about the middle of the second millenium B. C., as the date of the Aryan conquest of India. This theory has taken its stand on certain remarks made by the late German scholar, Max Muller.

As you know, one of the landmarks in Indian chronology is the appearance of Gautama, the Buddha, in the sixth century B. C. In his days the vast Vedic literature was already in existence. Within this literature Max Muller distinguished different periods, one comprising the Samhitás, another represented by the Bráhmanas and a third which produced the Sûtras; and suggested, as a working hypothesis, that we might assign about 200 years to each of these, and a fourth period of the same duration to the settlement and first development of Aryan civilisation in India. But he took care to emphasise the hypothetical nature of the whole theory and added that nobody would be able to tell whether the oldest Vedic hymn had been actually composed 1000, 1500, 2000 or 3000 years B. C.

Max Muller's successors have been less careful, and in Europe it has often been taken for granted that Vedic civilisa-

tion is not older than about 1500 B. C. You will, however, see at once how weak the foundation is on which the theory has been built up. It is little more than a mere guess.

In opposition to this theory we have another, independently started in India by the late scholar and patriot, Tilak, and in Europe by Prof. Jacobi. They both take their stand on certain indications of an astronomical nature in the Vedas, from which they draw the conclusion that the period of Indo-Aryan civilisation must reach back to the middle of the 5th millennium, and that the oldest Indian book, the Rigveda was composed during the latter half of a period of two thousand years which begun then. I do not myself understand anything about astronomy. It seems to me, however, that the arguments of Tilak and Jacobi carry great weight, and at all events their theory is the only one which is based on scientific reasons.

I therefore accept the period of say the 3rd millennium as the time during which the oldest Indo-Aryan songs were composed though it must be admitted that the proofs are not decisive. There is, moreover, one other consideration which strongly warms us not to assign too late a date to Vedic civilisation.

In Boghazkeni in Cappodocia, far away in the very heart of Asia Minor, have been found numerous clay tablets containing various documents of the Hetite empire. One of these documents is a treaty of peace between the Hetite king and the ruler of the Mitani people in Mesopotamia, dating from the 14th century B.C. The two kings have been at war with each other; now they conclude peace, and the peace is to be strengthened through a matrimonial alliance between the two royal houses. In the treaty the gods of the two peoples are invoked, and among the Mitani gods we suddenly find, after a number of strange names, four well-known Indian gods : Mitra, Varuna, Indra and the Násatyas.

This document has been much discussed, and some scholars have believed that the four deities are not Indian, but common Aryan gods, such as were worshipped by the Aryans before they split up into the two different branches, Indian and Iranian.

This view cannot, however, be correct. There are no

traces of an Iranian Varuna. That name of the great Asura is only known from Indian sources, though the conception covered by the name has its root in pre-Indian times. Indra's name is also known from Iranian sources, but it seems to be absolutely certain that Indra did not rise to the prominent position of protector and leader of the Aryan people in war, before the Aryans entered India, and the mention of Indra's name in the treaty is, as we shall presently see, only intelligible under the supposition that he was worshipped as the god of war. Finally the Násatyas are mentioned in the treaty as a divine couple, just as in the Vedas, while Iranian tradition does not speak of more than one Násatya, or as he is called in the Avesta, Náonhaipya.

In order to be able to judge about the evidence presented by these names, we shall have to examine why exactly these gods are mentioned in the treaty. It is evident that they must have been considered as standing for something which was of importance in connection with the treaty itself, and in the case of Mitra, Varuna and Indra the reason is apparent. Mitra was the guardian of pacts and agreements, and Varuna is *dhrtavarta,* he through whose power promises and oaths become binding. Mitra and Varuna are accordingly mentioned because they were the gods who stood behind every treaty, every solemn engagement. And Indra must have been the Indra of the Vedic Aryans, who had protected his people during the war; and whose sanction was necessary in order that the war might cease.

But what about the Násatyas? The explanation of the mentioning of these gods can only be given from the point of view of Vedic India. In the tenth book, one of the latest, of the Rigveda, they are praised as the guardians of the nuptial procession. And, it being stated in the treaty that the peace was to be followed up by a matrimonial alliance, it is evident that the reason why the Násatyas were invoked was exactly their position as best men to the bride.

We can accordingly infer from the Mitani treaty that the Mitani people had come under the influence of Indian civilisation, such as it appears in the later days of the Rigvedic period. And as the date of the treaty is the 14th century B.C., we must necessarily infer that the Aryans had been settled in India long

before that date; in other words, that the Aryan conquest must have been taken place long before the date assigned to it in the theory held by many European scholars.

The history of the Aryans in India is accordingly a very long one, and a review of the religious development of the Indo-Aryans will have to cover a period of about 5000 years. During these long centuries the Aryans came into contact with the older races inhabiting India, brought them under their sway and gradually became their leaders and teachers, in civilisation as well as in religious thought, till they all came to be more or less Aryanized.

But this Aryanizing was not effected by force, nor in such a way that the old inhabitants had to give up all their old notions and ideas and adopt the Aryan ones instead. To a great extent they went on worshipping in their traditional way, only replacing the names of their old gods by the Aryan ones. And the Aryans were wise enough to tolerate this state of things, and even to do their best to assist such development. There is a well-known tale about an aboriginal tribe who worshipped the boar. When it became Aryanized, it went on worshipping the boar, but the Brahmans taught them to see in him the Varáha Avatar of Vishnu, and thereupon to call him Vishnu.

Similar transformations have happened over and over again during the history of the Indian peoples. And in this way the conquerors learnt to look on their old enemies as people belonging to their own religious community, and the conquered races gradually absorbed the higher religious ideas of the Aryans. These amalgamated religious notions and the resulting common civilisation became strong ties which bound the whole population together, not as one nation, but rather as parts of a great all-comprising society. And as the Aryans were the spiritual leaders, who organised this large society and arranged it in classes and castes, and who also rearranged the religious systems of the older inhabitants, the whole ensemble got an Aryan stamp, in spite of all the different elements which had contributed to its composition.

It is a long period which we shall, in this way, have to cover. But we cannot be content to start our analysis from the Aryan

conquest of India. The conquerors did not enter the country as a new people, without any religious inheritance. Before they came, they had lived for centuries together with other Aryans, the ancestors of the later Iranians. And the old Aryans of that pre-Indian period were not uncivilized barbarians. They had already developed a certain organisation of the state, with petty kings, who were again subject to a paramount sovereign, or Samráj. And their religious ideas had reached a state of development where the organisation of the state and certain legal institutions had left their stamp. In a word, the Indo-Aryans had inherited a religious system which they brought to India and developed and modified in their new home.

Even the ancient Aryans, the ancestors of the Indo-Aryans and the Iranians, had passed through a long development. They were descended from a still older people, the ancestors of most European nations, the so-called Indo-European or Indo-Germanic tribe or tribes. These names are given to this ancient people by modern scholars in consideration of the fact that the southernmost descendants of the common stock are found in India, and the northernmost in Europe, more specially in Norway, a country inhabited by Germanic tribes,—Germanic being the wider term which comprises not only the Germans but also the other Teutonic races : the peoples of Norway, Sweden and Denmark, of Holland and parts of Belgium and of England.

Even the old Indo-Europeans had their own organisation and some distinct religious notions which can be traced behind the conceptions of the various Indo-European peoples, in the same way as inferences are drawn regarding the character of the Indo-European language from the speeches of the different branches of the family.

We must, therefore, extend our researches beyond the period of the Indo-Aryan conquest and try to find out the different substrata : in the first place the heritage which the Indo-Aryans, received from the older Aryans; in the second, the still more ancient Indo-European elements in the belief of the Aryans.

We have accordingly to distinguish three different stages in the history of Indo-Aryan religions : an old Indo-European

stage, a later Aryan one, and, finally the Indian stage. With regard to the two former we have no direct sources, no old books or religious documents. We can do nothing more than draw certain inferences. Such notions as are common to the Indo-Aryans and the Iranians are probably inherited from common Aryan ancestors, and where we find a general agreement in conceptions, or ideas, or even in designations, among several members of the Indo-European family, we seem justified in speaking of an Indo-European mentality, an Indo-European religion.

On the other hand, it should not be overlooked that our sources are more extensive than might appear at first sight.

To begin with, we naturally concentrate our attention on the ancient religious literature of the different peoples and base certain conclusions on it. The picture which we are able thus to draw is, however, very incomplete, and not always correct. Religious literature is nowhere in the world a true exponent of the people's mentality, or even of their deeper religious conceptions and feelings. It is saturated with myths and poetical fiction and replete with allegorical and fugitive embellishments which do not mean the same thing to us as they did to the original authors.

There is, however, another source from which we can derive some knowledge of bygone times. Popular customs, ceremonies and conceptions are often preserved with remarkably little change from generation to generation. And a careful critical analysis of the material which can be pieced together from these sources, often leads to important results. This branch of study has been much cultivated during the last decennium, and a great deal of material has been brought together from widely different parts of the globe. It is however necessary to proceed with the utmost care and circumspection. Our methods are still far from being sufficiently developed and certain.

By a proper analysis of all such sources we shall some day be able to draw a much fuller picture of Indo-European and Aryan religious belief than it is possible to-day. In these lectures I shall only be able to make some few remarks, concentrating my attention chiefly on the Indian period, and even

there relying mainly on literary sources. And inasmuch as this restricted field is still very wide, I can only hope to be able to draw the broad outlines.

Religion is, it should be remembered, a very complicated thing. It is not enough to examine the more or less learned discussions of the leading religious thinkers. That would only lead to a survey of the development of the higher Indian theology. The charm which attracts the scholar to the study of Indian religions, however, does not lie only in the fact that India has fostered deeper and finer religious conceptions than the remaining Asiatic countries; it is derived as well from the unbroken religious continuity which enables us to follow the development from primitive beginnings up to the highest perfection, to see how elementary, one might almost be tempted to say savage, ideas have been preserved and at the same time raised into a higher sphere. This development leads us to think that religion is not the creation of a high civilisation on the basis of a primitive human instinct, but that it is an eternal truth adapting itself to all stages of civilisation and development, without any shifting of its fundamental base.

It will be known to you how various scholars have attempted, in different ways, to give a definition of what we have to understand by the word religion. It is taken from the Latin language, and the old Romans were already trying to explain it. They tried to connect it with the verb *religare,* to bind, and explain it as that which bound man to do his duty towards a higher power,—the gods. A similar idea is embodied in the Indian word *dharma,* from *dhr,* to hold. Dharma is our duty, our one firm hold amidst the vicissitudes of phenomenal existence, it is *Satya,* the eternal truth, that which is *sat,* really and permanently existing, not merely coming into existence. And though it does not explain anything, we may rest content with this definition.

There is, in every religious belief, a vague sense of man's inability to lead his life independently, by his own force. Everywhere he is faced with powers and potencies which he cannot master, but which he tries to conciliate and utilize. Behind these powers some may imagine mighty beings.

accustomed as they are to see that powerful chiefs can do things that they themselves are incapable of achieving. In that case they will believe in some god, perhaps in many gods, and then we call their religion polytheism; or where the belief is definitely in one single god, we speak of it as monotheism. Others again, may think of the divine power as a universal force pervading the whole world, and then we call such belief pantheism. There are also many peoples who do not believe in gods, and yet have a religion. The reports of tribes devoid of all religious belief are due to misunderstanding, to the failure to grasp the mentality of strange races.

Much has been written and said about the so-called animism, the belief in ghosts and spirits. It has been mentioned that this belief is chiefly derived from the phenomena accompanying death. Something disappears from the body, which is left behind, apparently a lifeless form, which rots and decays. But the deceased cannot have disappeared and ceased to exist. He occasionally reappears in visions, or in dreams, or only in the mind, and to primitive man such occurences are real. Therefore man continues to live after death, in a different way and apart from his old body. And his power still remains for good or for evil, so that he is fed and worshipped. All the world over we find various forms of the worship of deceased ancestors, and here in India it plays a considerable part in the religious life of the people.

In man's worship we also find numerous magic rites aiming at utilizing the energy of Nature and the faculties of Man in different ways, and here we can already trace the belief in force, or power, or the different faculties, as entities which can be used in different ways for good or for evil. Such faculties or powers moreover, are not only found in man. They are also observable in numerous animals. The cow gives us food, she is the source of a mystic power which gives us life and strength. The tiger is in possession of wild dangerous strength, the poisonous snake has the power of the quick bite that kills in an instant.

Man may therefore wish to come into possession of such powers, and we frequently find that he tries to do so by means of magic rites and ceremonies. Sometimes we are told that he

tries to enter into a close alliance with some animal, a kind of marriage. And often we see that certain families or certain tribes believe in an intimate relation between themselves and some animal. We call such a belief Totemism,—from a word borrowed belonging to the language of the American Algonkins. The animals and the members of the group are brothers, they do not kill or hurt each other. The animal is their totem, and they themselves are such animals.

The mystic power can also be found in things which are, to all appearances, lifeless. In trees, in fire, or in water we can still speak of a certain kind of life. But human imagination does not rest there. The useful implement, made by man, is conceived to be the bearer of mystic power and may as such be worshipped. And such a force, it is supposed, can, through magic rites, be instilled into the most different things, even stones,—such objects being called fetishes, a word coined by the Portuguese and applied to various objects of worship which are considered as bearers of hidden power. It is therefore common to speak of this form of worship, in which the sorcerer plays a prominent rôle, as Fetishism.

Such power, as I have already indicated, can also be considered as a separate entity, with its own independent life and activity. The Polynesians and Melanesians speak of *mana*, a mystical power that can bring about things which are beyond the power of ordinary men. It may be found in human beings and in the most different objects, and it manifests itself in various effects which can only be explained through its presence. The skilful hunter is successful, the valiant chief is victorious, because he is filled with *mana;* and even a stone of a curious shape, *e.g.* one resembling a fruit, may be filled with *mana* and increase the fertility of a fruit tree when hidden in the ground at its root.

Similar ideas are hold by other tribes in other parts of the world. The Iroquese speak of *orenda,* and think for instance, that if a hunter is unsuccessful, the reason must be that the *orenda* of the animal is stronger than his own; the Algonkins know this power under the name of *manitu,* the South Indians call it *wakonda*, and so forth. Such mystic forces are often con-

sidered as some kind of emanation from the person or thing in which they are found. It is then deemed dangerous to approach such person or thing, they are deemed sacro-sanct or *taboo*, as the Polynesians say, and if one happens to come into contact with them, the evil results must be avoided by means of magic rites of different descriptions.

It will be seen that religious belief has many forms and shapes, and he would be rash who would try to find a general formula competent to cover them all.

Throughout, however, we find that deep feeling of dependency on mystic forces, which leads man to worship. He may try by various magic means to escape from the evil effects of such mystic power, or to strengthen it for his own benefit. And here we have the explanation of the strong position of the sorcerer, the *shaman*, or medicine-man. When the belief in these uncontrollable powers takes a personal form, we find man prostrating himself in prayer before his gods, or trying to win their favour by hymns, or by sacrifice.

In spite of the multifariousness of the forms, behind them all we everywhere find the inborn sense of the presence of a greater power before which man feels impelled to bow down. And in a higher stage of development this feeling becomes a firm conviction of the existence of somebody or something which is not only beyond human power, but which is everlasting or eternal. And when man rises to the conception that this eternal *satya* is also in himself, the only existing reality in the life of the individual, he ceases to fear and tremble, and religion becomes to him a source of hope and bliss.

THE GENESIS OF WESTERN CIVILISATION.

By KSHIRODCHANDRA SEN.

A civilisation is an ideological organism. Its organs are living ideas, and it is subject to growth, decay and death. It is maintained by the interdependence of the ideas which form its organs and work towards a definite end. Its health is determined by the vitality and strength of the ideas, its infirmity is marked by the weakness of one or more of them, and its decay by their diminishing interdependence.

Every living civilisation has a history, not merely of its life and activities, but of its origin and growth, and of its decline as well. This history forms its biography which is generally written after death. Western Civilisation is not yet dead, and the time for writing its biography has not yet arrived. I shall here try to give the history of its parentage, referring to its activities, if at all, only to test the correctness of that history.

A civilization comes into existence, or is born, like any other organism, *i.e.*, it implies one or more pre-existing organisms. But ideas are too subtle to enable us to determine whether a civilization has a sexual or an asexual origin; perhaps intellectuality may be regarded as the masculine, and morality as the feminine principle. Also a civilization, like a biological organism, grows by assmilation. The problem is thus complicated by the combination of philogenetic evolution and ontogenetic development.

The parentage of the psychology of western civilization is claimed for Christianity, for Greek culture, for Roman imperialism, and for biological Darwinism,—while the ethnical and physiographical psychology of the people, among whom it prevails, is all but completely forgotten. Man has a preference for exotics. Christianity, Greek culture, and Roman imperialism are foreign factors in the creation and development of Western Civilization, which is perhaps indebted to all these influences, acting directly or by repercussion; and the question appears to resolve itself into one of allocation.

The study is interesting, but unfortunately no systematic analytic effort appears to have been directed towards a solution of the problem; and as to synthetic endeavours, western researchers seem to be more hindered than helped by the intensity of their interests, by their predispositions and pre-occupations, which cloud the perspective. My justification in writing this short essay lies in the old saying that the spectator sometimes sees more of the game than the players.

As a creative factor Christianity has three distinct elements in it, *viz*: (1) the Old Testament (2) the Gospels and Apostolic teachings and (3) the resolutions of Œcumenical Councils and Papal bulls and edicts. To separate them is to take the bottom out of the religion. To believe in their unity is to do violence to logical consistency and the principles of science.

It appears marvellous that this religion stood erect for fifteen hundred years, and only gave way when foreign influences were somewhat accidentally brought to bear upon it by the crusades, which ended fatally for Christianity, not by their direct action in the field of battle, but by their indirect effect which scattered the vestigial elements of Greek culture all over Europe. These elements are supposed to form the foundation of what is known as the *Renaissance*, or new birth of Europe, that is to say, the birth of Western Civilization.

But though the influence of Greek culture as a formative factor is undeniable, yet to regard it as the sole or even chief creative influence would be erroneous. Greek culture had been already slowly percolating into western Europe through Mussalman scholars working in Islamic Universities in Spain. The expulsion of the Greeks from Constantinople scattered Greek scholars, like a previous event which had scattered the Jews, all over Europe. These scholars had not neglected to carry their scholarship with them, and the diffusive power of knowledge, asserting itself in the countries where Catholicism was dominating the intellectual outlook of the people, soon caused havoc in the sphere of existing ideas and ideals of life.

Old ideas were destroyed and replaced by older ideas resuscitated from their Greek sepulchres, to form the foundation of a new structure which has now developed into Western

Civilization. Destruction is the inevitable first stage of construction, though this may shock the conscience of comfortable people. The destruction of ideas is more potent than the destruction of brick and mortar, or the drowning of battleships, or the massacre of armies. To lay the foundation of Western Civilization it was necessary to destroy some foundational Christian ideas, and it was this essential work that Greek culture efficiently performed.

Greek culture has several aspects ranging from pure idolatry to the Transcendental Idealism of Plato. The element in Greek culture which has most influenced the psychology of western civilization is Protagorean Humanism,—the element which makes old Greece so admirable. It swept away much of the dust and dirt of other-worldliness with which the robust, Greek-like, Nordic mind was smothered by Christian teachings. The Teuton is a pragmatist by blood. The old Sylvan gods made very little permanent impression on his mind; and when the monks from Rome came to preach Christianity in the woods of Germany, they had the advantage of working in vacuity. The mind to be worked upon was fresh and there was very little in the shape of formulated ideas to be consciously destroyed.

The success of the monks, however, was superficial. Thousands were baptised in a single day of whom not one understood, or had the capacity to understand what baptism meant. Their ideas, if they had any, were unconscious or subconscious. They were pragmatic in their outlook on life, and continued to be so with a thin layer of the sandy silt of Christianity laid over their minds. This is the view taken by Herbert Spencer and, I think, it is not susceptible of being correctly contradicted.

Greek humanism, sucked in through the pipe of the *renaissance,* revived or rather re-inforced the old primitive pragmatism of the North, and clothed it with a new dignity and splendour. The joys of life and its hopes in this world, thereupon formed the main propulsive factor in human activity; and the achievements of the ancient Greeks, visualised by the study of Greek history and Greek literature, made these joys and hopes more alluring than the eschatological service of God in heaven

and its concomitant beatitude, taught by the monks and clergymen of the Roman Church.

Roman imperialism had no visible influence on the renascent people at large until the discoveries in the new world, geographical, geological, anthropological and sociological, and the possibility of exploitation on a Himalayan scale, laid before their robust hearts a new perspective of worldly joys and worldly hopes such as the richest and most imaginative among them had never experienced before. Roman imperialism meant the political domination and economical exploitation of the known world. The administrative adventures of Columbus and his immediate successors showed that a still more colossal empire was waiting for the nation which could make *might* create *right*.

It was the new world that helped to recreate the sentiment of imperialism in the old, which had nearly forgotten it. It was not confined to any particular region of western Europe, but spread over the smallest as well as the largest maritime nations. Spain, Portugal, France, England, Holland,—all felt the thrill of this sentiment vibrating through their national hearts. The cultivation of imperialistic ambition by several rival nations necessarily led to pugnacious Nationalism. The new imperialism thus created, experienced undreamt of vicissitudes during three centuries of colonization, conquest, revolt, resistance; and the forces generated by revolution and warfare with their sustained attitude of menace on the one hand and peaceful separatism, with its slow, discreet withdrawal on the other, are the original forces now dwindled and degenerated into mere nationalism.

The Imperialism of which we hear so much at the present time, is of a subtler type. It may be called commercial imperialism. Economic exploitation has taken a new turn, more intellectual but less moral and less dignified. It is divided, and divested of absolute monopoly, and so compelled to run zig-zag. The exploited nations themselves are becoming self-conscious, and their awareness is exposing the increasingly sneaky methods of the exploitation, which tries to maintain its dignity partly by inventing false excuses and apologies, and partly, Peter-like, by denying itself. The world is gradually approaching a stage in which exploitation will find it too hard to support itself and

in which therefore the conscious struggle for existence, as between man and man and between nation and nation, will cease by its own profitlessness; nay, by the discovery that it is detrimental to life and progress.

Darwinism, as a practical propulsive force in human life, is pragmatism traced backward to pure animalism, and pressed forward to the highest achievements of civilization. The struggle for existence—the gladiatorial life, with its association of blood, death and shocking suffering—which assumes a gloomy outlook in the visionary atmosphere of Christianity, possesses an unspeakable charm for the primitive pragmatic mentality, particularly of the Aryan race, which refuses to brood over, or even to look upon, the melancholy miseries of the vanquished and the rejected, and grows jubilant over the triumphs of the victorious and the selected. Admiration is lavished on the strong and contempt as a natural impulse is reserved for the weak. Charity to the latter in its highest form manifests itself, if at all, in the shape of oblivion. But for this contempt and forgetfulness, the struggle for existence would sooner or later come to be arrested by the inhibitive force of womanish weakness, and progress by natural selection would then come to an end.

Primitive pragmatism, the greatest gift of cosmic nature, lies at the bottom of Darwinism. The history of Europe is the history of a continuous struggle for existence, affecting the fortunes of individual classes and nations. Darwin was not required to travel across oceans in quest of facts in support of his theory. Indeed Herbert Spencer, who worked out the Darwinian theory of the survival of the fittest from man downwards, never resorted to the direct exploitation of foreign facts, and even his indirect exploitation through books and friendly reports was designed as an after-thought for purposes of reinforcement and verification only. The facts were scattered broad-cast before these philosophers, both in history and contemporary events. They had only to generalise from them.

Life in western Europe has never been, and is not now, a walk through a garden of fragrant flowers, and with the progress of its civilization the struggle for existence was bound to increase. The struggle for existence being the developing force in this

civilization, there must be a direct correlation between the variations of the civilization and those of the struggle. Optimism therefore suggests the necessity of an increasing intensity in the struggle for existence. And Benjamin Kidd is one of these optimists in whose opinion it will be an evil day for western civilization if this struggle slackens or slows down to a lower pitch of vehemence and fury.

Western people practised Darwinism for many centuries without knowing it. Darwin, like the grammarian, only made Europe conscious of what she was doing. Of course the common people have no knowledge of Darwin's theory, any more than they possess a knowledge of Christianity. Darwinism, so far as it concerns man, is merely a perspicuous statement of the pragmatic life of Europe, which existed before Christianity was preached to the people by the Roman monks, and which continued to thrive in spite of all their teachings, and still continues to flourish, adorned and enriched by a wealth of poetry and elegant literature.

To convert non-moral natural selection into moral divine selection in the struggle for self-aggrandisement, miscalled the struggle for existence, is to invest Darwinism, as applied to human life, with the glory and beauty of advanced pragmatism such as inspired Greek life in the age of Pericles. The morbid melancholy which entwines itself round the defeated and the rejected had no place in this philosophy of life. Defeat and misery were quickly drowned in a veritable Pacific Ocean of forgetfulness, while victories and survivals were celebrated in spectacular processions and splendid pageants for the benefit of the masses to prevent their mentality from being buried in an abysmal pessimism.

In this philosophy man never gets old. He is a grown up child all his life. The world is his play ground, where he pleasantly sweats to recreate his appetite, which is liable to fluctuation. He is always active and his occasional contemplative mood is designed to reinforce his gladiatorial energy. Life is a game to him. He does not give himself much opportunity to think of death as a possible event in human existence. When death does come, he faces it manfully as if Yama were his

competitor in a gladiatorial game. His very gods help him. They never carry his imagination into eschatological heights, or hurl it into fundamental depths, to bring about any aberration in his habitual joyful enthusiasm.

The Greek humanist perpetually lived in the *seen;* and no one was a genuine Greek who was also not a sincere humanist. He loved power, beauty and wealth. Western civilization also loves these things, but the order of precedence is altered to wealth, power and beauty. The difference is great, and may eventually lead to results which will render it impossible to trace the one psychology from the other. It is this Greek humanism which has influenced European life from the sixteenth century onwards. It is this humanism which has received the sanction of science from the Darwinian philosophy of the survival of the fitttest, and has ceased to be dismayed either by the gloomy prognostications, or by the airy aspirations, of the posthumous aspect of Christianity, which, never bright at any period of history, was cast into the penumbra by the *renaissance,* and has now been all but completely put out of sight by the refractive implications of the theory of evolution.

Among foreign factors, Jewish blood is as much traceable among the population of Europe to-day, as the Whiteman's blood is traceable in the Negro population of the United States. The Jew, as pure Jew, has all but ceased to exist in Europe. He has nominally become a convert to Christianity, but in reality he has converted the Christian into a Jew. The German Jew is perhaps the most influential man in Commercial and Industrial Europe, and his example is being followed by the Jew of other countries, of whom the Russian Jew is the most conspicuous at the present moment. The British Jew has captured the heart of England by peaceful penetration. And entire Europe now listens to the intruction of the Jew with greater reverence than the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount ever received from her. The living Jew has eclipsed the crucified Jew. He has, by the camouflage of faith in Christianity, and by means of mercantile and sexual amity, surreptitiously penetrated and leavened the very blood and marrow of the western world, and now commands it as an invisible but verifiable presence.

The mass of the Christian peoples, for a thousand years and more, never had the opportunity of knowing the inwardness of the religion they professed; what they learnt and practised was a mixture as far removed from the genuine article as self-assertion is from self-renunciation. Christianity is said to be the religion of a Book, and that book was an unknown quantity among its followers. The Bible was never taught. Besides, the sixty books which pass under the name of the Holy Bible contain divergent ideas which challenge mutual reconciliation and only keep themselves together by the tightened screws of unreasoned faith. This faith began to be shaken as soon as attention was called to the aspiring narrowness of the ancient Hebrew mind, which temerously stretched out its arms of imagination to reach the ends of heaven and earth without proper spiritual equipment.

It has continued to be shaken with increasing violence by later discoveries, until now nothing of it remains except the hollow apologetics of interested persons and the dubious compliments of rationalists indulging in the historic method. Of the three parts into which I divided the creed of Christianity, the Old Testament has fallen by the power of science, specially astronomy, geology and biology; Papal edicts and bulls have fallen by the power of Greek humanism, which hates tyranny and craves for freedom; while the Gospel never made any deep impression on the pragmatic mind of Europe, which identifies both truth and morality with utility,—an identification, at first unconscious, which gradually became conscious and is now fortified by outworks of logic and worldly experience.

Caxton made it possible for Europe to read the Bible and to know that her actual religion was not the religion of a book, but of excrescences that had grown upon it. The book, when translated and printed, taught her to repudiate the religion in vogue, and the renascence taught her to repudiate the book. Science has confirmed her in both the repudiations. So that the religion of Europe is now a destructive lack of faith, and not of creative belief. The philosophy of Europe is also a series of repudiations and destructive criticisms which far outweigh the tiny constructive efforts of its solitary, segregated researchers.

Finally, the general moral and spiritual atmosphere has been gradually disinfected so as to be purged of all vestiges of the bacilli of the Sermon on the Mount and the Kingdom of God.

Let it not be supposed that I in any measure disparage Christism. I only mean to convey the idea that Western Civilization has been destructive of Christism proper, and conversely, if Europe had really cultivated Christism, instead of muscular and military Christianity, western civilization would have experienced almost insurmountable difficulties at its very start, across the Atlantic, where it laid the foundation of its characteristic gigantic industrial life and productive achievement by a moral process which would have been shocking to Christ,—a process of depopulation which assumed the ethics of rat-extermination in a plague-infected town.

It will thus be seen that of the several formative principles of Western Civilization the primitive pragmatism of the Nordic people is the earliest and the most potent. It is also indigenous, and therefore stands in the same relation to western civilization as, according to Hebrew legend, Adam stands to the present generation of men. Greek culture, or to be more exact, Greek humanism only reinforced and polished it, sand-papering all stains of Christianity out of it.

The moral influence of science, sub-consciously suggested or insinuated by Charles Darwin and Herbert Spencer, is only a restatement of this original pragmatism. It emphasises the power of the cosmic process in human life, and firmly enthrones the 'ape and tiger' quality in the heart of man, not as a sneaky influence ashamed to avow itself openly, but as a force, inherent in the nature of man, and of stupendous advantage to him in his relations with his weaker neighbours,—as a force which adds strength and beauty, truth and dignity to the joys of the life *defacto*, by casting into the shade the life of the immortal soul, which, by mysterious divine ordinance, poiselessly trembles on the horns of the dilemma of earthly joys and the sorrows of perdition on the one hand, and of worldly sufferings and the beatitude of heaven on the other.

A soulless life in a sea of Christianity, deep or shallow, had its dangers. Huxley perceived this, and found a safe steering

rudder in Agnosticism, which successfully prevented Christian indignation from rising to incandescent redness, and at the same time mellowed the growing Hæckelian heart of material monism by an ingenious compromise, which made truth and belief invertebrate. His success was partly due to the increasing infirmity of Christianity, which had saved its longevity, but not its prestige and dignity, by tolerating what it had no adequate power to persecute.

Since Huxley's time, western philosophy, nursed and reared in a Darwinian atmosphere, has gradually lifted its voice from a mere whisper to a strident treble in favour of the realities of life,—as the man in the street sees them. The latest development of this phase of philosophy is the formulation of the creed of Pragmatism, which, while posing as a mere philosophic method, in reality exercises the influence of a definite cult upon the human mind.

Jacobin Pragmatism denies any final ideal as the goal of progress, but adds to the ordinary moral rules, qualifications suggested by expediency or immediate utility. The doctrine is no doubt obscured by professions of regard for ultimate benefit and whole benefit, as well as immediate benefit, but no impartial mind is likely to be misled by these professions, when the fundamental principles of the creed reject the idea of cessation of change and progress. Jacobinism, which is easily intelligible to the common intellect, is a restatement of the primitive pragmatism or paganism of the early centuries of Europe, with embellishments gathered from logic and culture, and is likely to reign supreme until some unforeseen catastrophe sweeps it away.

As to the future, it may be asserted that what has been conquered by the sword can only be maintained by the sword; and if the western people begin to study the Sermon on the Mount in earnest, they are bound to lose their ascendancy, their applied science, their power of exploitation and the grandeur of their social life. The result may be a new civilization of a higher moral and spiritual order, but it will essentially be different from Western Civilization as we know it.

MIHINTALE.

The Ancient Home of the Buddhist Priesthood of Ceylon.

By F. G. Pearce.

Anuradhapura, the ruined ancient Capital of Ceylon, is a city of sad memories. The hand of the destroyer fell heavily upon it, not once but many times, till all the life was crushed out of that fair form, and nought remained for its inhabitants but to weep among the ruins and to die, or to flee whither, for a time at least, the dreaded Tamil could not come.

Surely the memories of those days of agony and of lamentation linger yet among the ancient stones, covered though they are now by the prolific hand of Nature,—a hand in the tropics scarely less destructive to Man's works than that of the invader. For, Anuradhapura's great *dagobas,* vast solid domes of masonry, some more than three hundred feet high and as much in diameter, are now scarce distinguishable from natural hills, densely covered as they are, not by mere weeds, but by forest trees, creepers and jungle.

And her palaces—those fair halls over whose polished floors moved heroic kings and noble women, and where was heard the joyous prattle of children and the laughter of courtiers? Utterly gone! Not even a wall, or an archway, to show where they stood, as in the ruins of Rome and Persepolis and Babylon the Great. Nothing,—save here and there a cluster of bare granite pillars, a few still upright, though at all angles, among many more lying prone, and the whole buried often under many feet of soil and debris, the heaped-up rubbish of Man and Nature. *Ichabod* indeed! Never could the phrase be more appropriately applied than to Anuradhapura. For Jerusalem remains, some of its ruins at least repaired and utilised; but Anuradhapura is no more,—its glory forever departed with its kings.

Anuradhapura, therefore, is a city of sad memories. Sorrow haunts it. Not so Mihintale, only eight miles distant. For Mihintale has ever been the city of the *Sangha,* the Buddhist order of Monks, whose first principles are *Aniccha, Dukha, Anatta* (Impermanence, Sorrow, Selflessness), and that *Sangha* still occupies it, unmoved by the impermanence of men and matter.

Not that Mihintale has escaped destruction. It has shared precisely the same fate as its royal neighbour. Its great *dagobas* are clothed with dense jungle; the stones of its halls and shrines strew the earth. Yet peace remains,—not a melancholy, but a mellow Peace. Here men achieved, one feels, and the record of their achievmeent persists, not in the perishable evidence of brick and stone, but absorbed into the very atmosphere, and in the hearts of the people even unto a century of generations after.

Save at festival times, full moon days, especially Vaisakh, the Full-Moon of May, when Gautama Buddha was born, few come to Mihintale. The Brethren of the Yellow Robe still occupy the ancient rock-cells and a few modern hermitage buildings on the summit. For the rest, the place is undisturbed, save by the bear, the leopard, and the elephant, innumerable birds and monkeys, and the ubiquitous lizards, grasshoppers and their kind.

Mihintale is not on the level, as Anuradhapura is, but is one of the largest of the few isolated rocky eminences in the neighbourhood. Its principal peak is about one thousand feet high, and the whole area must be several square miles in extent. The entire mountain from foot to summit was donated to the Buddhist *Sangha* by King Devanampiya Tissa, of Lanka, about 300 B.C., when, upon this very spot, he was converted to Buddhism by Mahinda, the priestly son of Asoka the great. Generation after generation added to the splendid buildings which soon adorned the site, till the whole mountain-side was laid out with gardens and groves amid which were *dagobas, viharas,* dwelling-places for the monks, *pansalas* for the brotherhood, and cells for the solitary.

No more lovely and appropriate spot could have been selected for an *áráma*. Even amid its ruins its surpassing beauty appears. One who wanders, as I did, away from the principal ascent, will at every turn find himself in fair secluded spots, where the ruined foundations of pillars, of doorways and flights of steps, of shrines and of cells, peep through among the grasses and flowers, offering cool harbourage and a tranquil retreat. Ancient trees embower the sites of these well-planned, beautifully arranged hermitages, between whose spreading branches the sunlight streams, flooding the greensward beneath with golden light, and making the deep shadows seem cooler by contrast.

Seat yourself in one of these groves, near such an *áráma*, in the shadow of a great tree, whose roots will form a good resting-place. No sadness is among *these* ruins. The grey stones, now dislodged from their true alignment, speak not of past failures, but of past accomplishments. The men who lived here *achieved*. They trod a path leading to Peace, if ever men did. Their bodies perished,—mayhap in later years many died by violence even, when Anuradhapura went up in flames,—but their hearts and minds were established in the things eternal.

And those last days! What courage! What resignation! What steadfastness! From Mihintale's slopes the countryside all around is visible. Think how, from that high vantage-point, the monks must have watched the Tamil storm approaching. Night after night, nearer come the flares of distant villages going up in destroying flames. Day after day the rumours arrive, thick and fast and terrible. And then, one day the war-drums are heard on the wind. Nearer they approach. Nearer to the Royal City, so ancient so renowned, so beautiful. The monks are chanting *pirith** night and day.

Then, in reply, the drums and conches of the Sinhalese army of defence. Amid hopes and fears the king marches out to meet the invader. From Mihintale the dust is seen, the dread

*Buddhist *mantras* (words of power) for obtaining the blessing of the *Devas*.

sounds of battle are heard,—harbingers of the destruction soon to come even to that place of peace. Then the messengers arrive : messengers with evil tidings.

Alas for Anuradhapura ! As the monks see the dust and smoke rising above its shining roofs and domes, are there not many who, in spite of all their philosophy and their discipline, cover their faces with their hands and weep? Are there not many, even among the older ones, who in the silence of their cells shed bitter tears? And if not by day, when night falls, then indeed may human hearts be forgiven if they can endure no more. For from Mihintale the full terrors of the scene is visible, the city all in flames. The sacred shrines destroyed. The people massacred !

Last scene but one—the flood of refugees, for not many stay at Mihintale. They know full well that the Tamils will have no more respect for the holy places at Mihintale or for its yellow robes, than they showed in the Capital city, where the Buddhist Temples were the first objects of their rage. Ah ! the stream that passes along the road to the east. Mothers and little children, old men and women, falling by the roadside, fainting, dying. And grown men weeping,—hopeless, helpless.

So far as they can, the kind-hearted monks tend. But not for long. When day dawns the Tamil drums are heard,—nearer and nearer. The turn of Mihintale has come.

Let us draw a veil over the end. Peace be to the slayers as to the slain,—for in truth the dwellers in that holy place died with no curses on their lips. They knew better. Their long discipline of mind and heart and body had not failed them. Not in vain had they been followers of the Blessed One.

Wherefore, there is no wrath, no misery, amid the groves and glades of ruined Mihintale. It is still a place of Peace and Joy. May it ever remain so, for the healing of sore hearts and world-weary minds.

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammasambuddhassa.

THE SKELETON.

(*Translated by the Author*).

A beast's bony frame lies bleaching on the grass.
Its dry white bones—Time's hard laughter—
cry to me:
Thy end, proud man, is one with the end of the cattle
that graze no more,
for when thy life's wine is spilt to its last drop
the cup is flung away in a final unconcern.

I cry in answer:
Mine is not merely the life that pays its bed and board
with its bankrupt bones, and is made destitute.
Never can my mortal days contain to the full
all that I have thought and felt, gained and given,
listened to and uttered.

Often has my mind crossed Time's border,—
is it to stop at last for ever at the boundary
of crumbling bones?
Flesh and blood can never be the measure of the truth
that is myself;
the days and moments cannot wear it out
with their passing kicks;
the way-side bandit, Dust, dares not rob it of all its possessions.

Know that I have drunk the honey of the formless
from the lotus of endless forms;
through the cave of sufferings I have found
the secret path of delight;
and have seen tracks of light across the voiceless desert of the dark.
Death, I refuse to accept from thee
that I am nothing but a gigantic jest of God,
that I am annihilation built with all the wealth of the Infinite.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

THE JOINT FAMILY AND SOCIAL PROGRESS.

By Prof. K. M. Panikkar.

The political activity of a nation, except in revolutionary times, concerns itself with the outward forms of life, and in this sense the political idea is never absent from the masses. But it is otherwise when questions which effect the basic structure of society is concerned. The principles of social life, the philosophy of national civilisations, the ideas that are at the base of external institutions, are all left untouched both by the mass mind as well as by the political mind in ordinary times. When a civilisation changes its character, the social institutions which form the tangible expression of the replaced systems must be already undermined by a process of revolutionary thought in which the leadership belongs not to the soldiers and the statesman but to the *littérateurs* and the philosophers.

The French revolution provides us with one of the best examples. It differed from other sudden political changes in that it reconstructed society according to a new set of principles, and changed the very character of the civilisation of Western Europe. But this was done after the *Encyclopædists* and other leaders of French Illumination, from Voltaire to Condorcet, had achieved a revolution in social thought, ousting accepted philosophies from their seats of honour, undermining even those with which the existence of society itself was intertwined. There was not an institution of the *ancien regime* from the Monarchy and the Church to the methods of education, which these daring souls did not attack and destroy. This intellectual preparation gave to the French uprising the character of a re-birth of democracy, of the creation of a new civilisation, which the merely political revolution of England and America did not possess.

The same is the case with the Russian revolution. Unlike the German revolution, it is more than a change in the form of Government. It is the application of a new social idea, as in the case of the French revolution, though in a different way,—an attempt to create a new civilisation. The social principles of

this experiment gained supremacy over the intellectual world of Europe long before their political manifestation.

Marx and Engels had already proved that capitalist society had neither the support of morality, nor even of the ordinary principles of utilitarianism; that property as therein constituted was nothing but theft, so that the workers of the world had all the world to gain, and nothing to lose but their chains. Marx's statement that "Property is theft" was as much the dynamic gospel of the new society, as Rousseau's ringing cry that "Every man is born free, but is everywhere in chains" was of the French revolution. Thus the social idea, without which political changes are merely surface ripples, can come only from individuals,—neither from the masses, nor the classes. The political idea is only the most widespread and universal force which can get easy hold of the mass-mind, and great changes in history happen when a revolutionary social idea gets transformed into a working political principle.

We talk of the Indian people and of Indian civilisation because the Indian mind, as expressed by its institutions, is essentially the same. In spite of differences in race and religion India is one, because its externalised soul, from whatever angle we may look at it, is the same. The food of the people all over India is of the same type. The same kind of cities and villages, the same kind of social customs, the same system of joint family, extend all over India. Look at the methods of ploughing and watering fields, of threshing corn,—they are virtually the same wherever you may go. Likewise, the social idea behind the type of civilisation, as expressed in its institutions, that we meet with in India, is the same.

That the present social organisation is wasteful and inefficient in results, reactionary and obscurantist in the light of modern developments, and so stands in the way of our right political progress, will be granted by most people. The necessity for social reform is recognised, but it is still to be *reform* and not *revolution,* still to be concerned with details and not with fundamentals. In social types, as in other forms of human activity, the externals matter little. What is of importance is the central idea on which the activity is to be based.

The tinkering little reforms that are advocated by our social reformers are only so many attempts to polish up the exterior of our social body. What is necessary, if we want to create a new India and to build up a new civilisation, is to change the social mind itself.

The central institution around which the whole of Indian life is built up is the joint family. It seems to have existed in India all through history. In the time of the Buddha, as in time of Sankara, it was the unit of the Hindu nation. It has existed through the many centuries of Indian civilisation in almost the same state as we find to-day. But whatever the benefits it might have brought, it has been without doubt the most powerful force against the development of a strong social feeling in India.

We shall endeavour to show how this Joint Family system has been the root cause of our physical degeneration, of the darkness in which our masses are buried, of the enthronement of authority in every detail of our life, and of the desparate fatalism that has become almost a national philisophy for us. Without a complete reconstruction of this family system, no alteration in our national character large enough to enable us to give life to the decadent social institutions which at the present time constitute a dead-weight on the national soul now seeking to reassert itself, would be possible at all.

The true principle of social evolution is the highest possible freedom for the individual, both in his self-development as well as in his sphere of service to Society. The main function of the state in this view is the creation of conditions which will afford to every member the largest scope for the development of his individuality. There is no other justification for an organised society or community. If it is granted that freedom of the individual to develop and express himself is the purpose for which the state exists, and its one and sole function, then no social structure which is not conducive to this main purpose could be helpful in its realisation.

That is why the joint family is the greatest hindrance in the way of Indian political evolution, because it is a force against the freedom of the individual. The main characteristic of the joint family is its patriarchal nature, the authority of the father

over the children. The individual disappears in a group, which purports to exist, as does the autocratic sovereign, for his good,—but not for the purpose of developing him as a free citizen. The civic virtues, and the principles of service to society, are as nothing to filial virtues in the family code, so that no chance is given to the individual to rise to his full height. In this way the joint family certainly stands in the way of social progress.

In olden times, when the ideal of society as a purposive organisation, as a large family embracing all members in a well defined geographical unity, was absent, the family was perhaps the largest group which could give the individual the opportunities for shelter, co-operation, and service that he required. Even Aristotle, who believes in the logical priority of the state to all human institutions, accepts the chronological priority of the family, and in fact derives the state from it. Probably the historical conditions in India helped to strengthen the family against the state, which never became identified with the whole community. If a vigorous political tradition identifying the whole Indian people with the state had developed, the family system might have weakened. However, be the historical explanation what it may, it is undeniable that the joint family has been and is opposed to the growth of the right social idea.

It stands in the state, as a group within a group, generating its own loyalties, raising barriers within the community, and forming an intermediary between the state and the individual. Though the relation in which the family thus stands to the community is much the same as that of the trade union to the state, there is one fundamental difference.

The trade unions, and other groups of that kind within the state, are voluntary organisations, whose claim to the loyalty of the individual is based on material considerations. The choice is easy enough between the trade union and the state. Not even the most ardent Labourite would claim a priority of allegiance for the particular organisation or party of which he is a member. The whole life of a man is not identified with such associations, as it is with the family or the state. Hence though the trade unions, employers' associations, and such other bodies form states within the state, and divide in a sense the loyalty of the

individual, their hold on the members can never be strong enough to form a serious hindrance to social unity or to political progress.

But not so with the joint family. Its claims on the individual are all-embracing; the loyalty which it demands does not admit of any rival, and therefore its relation with the individual is as exclusive as that of the state itself. That loyalty to the family has been a serious rival to the loyalty to the state, is proved by history. Further, in India, owing to peculiar circumstances, the joint family system has been anti-social in another way. By marriages, alliances, and relationships each group of families has tended to form sub-castes dividing the community further and further, and narrowing down at every step the circle of social interest; with the result that the Hindu community has become almost a sociological fiction.

Instead of the widening process, which is essentially the process of civilisation, we had in India this extraordinary tendency of each family, with its relations, to form narrower and narrower groups, in great contrast to the general process all over the world of the expansion of communities,—of loyalty to the tribe giving place to loyalty to larger and larger groups, and finally to the nation. In India the opposite has been the case. The greatest loyalty is to the smallest of all groups,—the family,—which calls for the greatest sacrifices.

Besides, even from the point of view of the individual, the family stands in the way of the fullest development. It has been remarked that in India no man enjoys his individual family life as that is known in the other countries. An individual is not a unit, he is a part. He lives along with others. Novels depicting modern Indian life express all through this single idea: the conflict of the individual family with the joint family. The novels of Tagore, and even his own reminiscences, demonstrate how deep-rooted is this revolt against the group-family in the individual's mind.

All over India this is the same. In Madras, in Bengal, in the U. P., everywhere among Hindus, and to a large extent among Muslims, the group-family stands in the way of the individual family and is the cause of our stunted social growth

and the slovenly habits of crowd-life that characterise our home-surroundings. It has often been noticed how after a futile protest, individuals, who happen to have been brought up under better conditions, eventually surrender to the tradition of the family, even the most cultured and the highest developed mind being dragged down to the level of its lowest member.

Another important effect of this system is on the position of women. To the newcomer by marriage the mother-in-law is the proverbial tyrant. The picture of the young bride brought into a strange family, where even the sympathy and love of her husband are almost inaccessible to her across the artificial wall of the female group, has often been drawn. It has a deadening effect on the sensibility of our womanhood. No amount of college education can improve the lot of our women, unless the family is reconstructed and each woman becomes the mistress of her own home, shouldering the responsibility of bringing up her children and providing for them the right mental and moral atmosphere. A refined home is no luxury, it is a necessity; and in the mix-up of the joint family system it is impossible even for the most sturdy spirits to build up the home they want.

Then again, the system of marriage without any natural selective process, which the joint family necessitates, is the cause of the racial degeneration in India. The abnormal percentage of infant mortality, and the absolute impossibility of popularising sanitary ideas are due to the same system. The physical conditions of the life of the young mother in the joint family are such that without its reconstruction there can be no chance of India rearing up a race of able-bodied, sturdy men and women, who can maintain their own position in the world. When children are huddled together, and individual attention to their up-bringing is not available, the race naturally degenerates physically.

More than this, there is the psychological effect of the joint family to which sufficient attention has not been attracted. It is to this system that we must trace the ingrained feeling in the Hindu mind that authority whether it be in state, religion, or social custom, is in itself sacred. What is established is to be obeyed. The liberation of the critical faculty, which throws

every institution, every ideal and every dogma into the crucible of thought, and which is so necessary for a progressive people, is impossible in a society in which its primary unit, the family itself, is an embodiment of the principal of authority. The pernicious effect of this on our national growth need not be elaborated.

From all these considerations it would seem that what is most required is to free the individual from the manacles of the joint family system. The purpose of every society is to move forward through the exertion of its own powers and to develop for itself institutions which will permit the greatest development of its constituent members. For this, obviously the most necessary step is to free the individual from the bonds of customs and institutions which necessarily weigh him down and impede such growth.

We have seen that from every point of view, physically, psychologically and socially, what does the greatest harm to Indian people now is the persistence of their primitive organisation of the family. Reconstruction of this system in a way which would afford the individual the greatest possible liberty, with a view to remove a middle-organisation between him and Society, so as to give him greater chances for serving the latter, and finding therein the best and highest form of life, seems to be what is now required.

Social progress, as d'Holbach pointed out, involves continuous mental effort in examining and diagnosing the diseases of society, and of equally continuous activity in experiment and replacement. In India the time has come when, unless social thinking revolutionises ideas and transforms institutions, the common life Society cannot advance. To my mind the first stage towards that must come through the reconstruction of the family which alone will give the individual the necessary freedom of mind, relieved from the leaden weight of inherited custom, to think and act purposively for the benefit of Society as a whole.

THE BODY OF HUMANITY

By C. F. Andrews.

The Function of Islam.

It has always appeared to me a comparatively simple matter to relate organically together, in one family history and genealogy, the two great movements in the sphere of universal religion which sprang from India and Palestine,—the Hindu-Buddhist and the Christian,—because they have as their background the one common principle of Ahimsa. They start from the old theory of retaliation only to reject it. They enunciate the new principle of overcoming evil by the perfect submission and sacrifice of love.

But it is not so easy to discover the exact relation within the Body of Humanity which is held by Islam. That strange meteoric phenomenon in human history came forth sudden and blazing like a portent from the Arabian Desert. It still bears the mark of the desert upon it. One of its most vital functions, as an organised religion, is to send back each believer at least once in his life on a pilgrimage to the desert, there to feel the awe of the divine worship and the divine unity. Throughout one month in each year, the month of Ramazan, each faithful Muslim has not only to obstain from all food from sunrise to sunset, but even from a single drop of water. This law is to be observed, even in the tropics, when the lunar month of Ramazan falls in the burning heat of June, and it is faithfully and widely kept. I have seen in Africa the heroic suffering undergone in its observance.

The unique and intense ardour which burnt within this new religion, till it held sway in a few years from the borders of India to the Atlantic Ocean, has never been adequately explained. For many centuries Christian prejudice and fanatical superstition in the West were too strong for any impartial verdict to be given. In modern times, also, political considerations have entered in

and these have once more obscured any clear understanding. Such recent books as Lothrop Stoddard's, 'New World of Islam,' or M. Andrée Service's 'Psychology of Islam', are politically biassed. Yet no impartial observer can fail to be impressed by the supreme part which Islam has played over large areas of the world's surface and at critical times in the world's history.

For it has to be remembered that Islam is a living power to-day among many races of mankind, which neither Buddhism nor Christianity had been able to reach in their greatest periods of expansion. It has also appealed in modern times by its very simplicity and directness to master men of action in Europe, America and Asia. Above all, it has impressed men by its virility as a great and noble creed. I have read how General Gordon, who was himself a fervent Christian, maintained more and more as he grew older an attitude of reverence for the deep religious fervour and sincerity which he found in Islam. Very many others, who have lived and associated with Musalmans, have felt the same appeal.

During my first years in India, when I was at Delhi, my own heart at first was drawn towards Islamic ideals more than towards the Hindu outlook upon life, both on account of what I saw with my own eyes and also the intimate friendships with Muslims that I made. At that time, indeed, I became thoroughly absorbed in Islam; its history and culture fascinated me, and I read and studied all I could about it. If, since then, the pendulum has swung some degrees the other way, nevertheless that first reverence for Islam has fundamentally remained unshaken and those earliest impressions of its dignity and greatness have never since been blurred. In all that I put down in this article, I write with those memories still vivid; and no criticism that I have to make will be other than that of an ardent friend whose love is manifest and apparent.

Whatever view we take, by no means can Islam be considered by anyone who carefully reviews the facts as a spent force in the history of mankind. Its strongest opponents give it the honour of never treating it as such. Dr. S. M. Zwemer, for instance, has declared, times without number, that from the point of view of population Islam is spreading in Africa far more

rapidly than any other religion. It is not rationally possible, therefore, if the theory of an organic unity of religion is held, to account for this persistent vitality in Islam except on the assumption that it has some necessary function to perform in the Body of Humanity, which could not be effected in any other way. What is that function? How can we best explain its rational existence?

I do not think that we can point to any new law of the spiritual life that Islam has discovered for the first time in human history. Behind both Christianity and Hindu-Buddhism, as I have said, there was actually such a discovery. For in both, supreme emphasis was laid upon the principle of Ahimsa as the essence of all true religion. I cannot see this side of religious truth emphasised in Islam. The Quran, as I read it, does not carry the solution of this great problem of non-retaliation any further forward. Rather, the opposite principle of retaliatory justice appears to gain a fresh approval and conviction.

I know that we have the remarkable instance of the Prophet's forbearance and magnanimity, when Mecca was entered in triumph after weary years of struggle. But there were clearly political gains of the very highest order to be obtained by such a magnanimous act; and deeds of dire punishment are equally apparent as a part of the Prophet's conduct along with such acts of sublime forgiveness. "I *believe* in retaliation," was the final word to me in an argument, which I had with one of the noblest Musalmans I have ever known; and another said to me, with an emphasis which I can never forget, "My religion *commands* me to take up the sword on certain occasions."

I have often wondered, therefore, whether there might be some practical defect in the Ahimsa doctrine itself, when pressed to its logical conclusion. The strong personality of Mahatma Gandhi,—in spite of the lengths to which he would go in carrying out to the full this doctrine of Ahimsa,—has always given him a natural leaning towards Islam. This represents an instinct, which goes deep into his inner life. Sometimes, I have thought that he had found in Islam a corrective to a weak-

ness that he subconsciously felt in the logic of Ahimsa, during its present stage of imperfect human representation.

As a pacifist myself, I know full well, how those in Europe, who as conscientious objectors have been carrying out in practice to the full the pacifist doctrine, have experienced the same inherent weakness in their own position, when they have pathetically tried to face the hard facts of human life as a whole, without surrendering their creed. Is the phenomenon of the sudden rise of Islam in part at least due to the fact, that a counterbalancing weight was needed, in face of the extreme Ahimsa position,—or at least a restatement of its postulates in terms less abstract and logical, and more in touch with human life?

Many years ago, at a very early stage in the great European War, my own mind, as a convinced conscientious objector, was very greatly troubled by an acute inner problem. I had no doubt at all concerning my own personal attitude towards War: it would never be conceivably possible for me to shoot down my fellow man. But what was to be my attitude towards others? Should I condemn outright those who were taking part in the War? In my perplexity, I wrote to the poet, Rabindranath Tagore, and he answered me as follows:

> In most matters of vital importance I have one thing to guide my thoughts, and it is this, that the figure which represents creation is not 'one' but 'two'. In the harmony of two contradictory forces everything rests. Whenever our logic endeavours to simplify things by reducing the troublesome 'two' into 'one' it goes wrong.
>
> Some philosophies say that motion is all *maya* and truth is static. Others are of opinion that truth is fluid, and that it is only *maya* which represents it to us as static. But truth is beyond logic: it is the everlasting miracle: it is static and dynamic at the ame time: it is ideal and real; finite and infinite.
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> The principle of war and the principle of peace both together make truth. They are contradictory: they seem to hurt each other, like the finger and the strings of a musical instrument. But this very contradiction produces music. When only one predominates, then there is the sterility of silence.

Our human problem is not whether we should only have war or peace, but how to harmonise them perfectly. So long as there is such a thing as force, we cannot say that we must not use force, but that we must not abuse it by making it the sole standard, and thus ignoring love. When love and force do not go together, then love is mere weakness and force is brutal. Peace becomes death when it is alone; war becomes a Demon when it kills its mate.

Of course, we must not think that killing one another is the only form of war. Man is pre-eminently a moral being: his war instinct should be shifted to the moral plane and his weapons should be moral weapons. The Hindu inhabitants of Bali, while giving up their lives before the invaders, fought with their moral weapons against physical power. A day will come when men's history will admit their victory. It was a war. Nevertheless it was in harmony with peace, and therefore glorious.

The allusion in the poet's letter to the action of the inhabitants of Bali needs some explanation. The Hindus of Bali, when forcibly invaded by the Dutch, dressed themselves in the white robes of sacrifice and offered themselves to be shot down, till the Dutch refrained from shooting. The Queen of Holland declared that such noble and brave people deserved their independence and refused to bring them any further into subjection. The Poet heard of the incident from an American painter who had recently visited the island. He had often discussed it with me as an ideal use of 'force' on the part of the Hindu inhabitants.

This letter of the Poet has often come back to my mind when pondering over the Hindu Muslim difficulty in India, and the parallel pacifist dilemma in Europe. Human life itself, as the poet shows, is a series of contradictions; and the very fact that there has seemed no immediate solution to the Hindu problem in India and the pacifist problem in Europe, has itself made me more and more wistfully anxious to know whether it is only,—to quote Hamlet's words,—

> Between the fell incensed points
> Of mighty opposites,

that human progress can be made at all in the highest matters.

It may be true that there is a primitive crudity in the Semitic mind, which has produced certain features of the Islamic faith. But may there not also be an over-subtlety in the Indian mind and a reliance upon abstract philosophic truth alone? Would the balance in human thought and practice have been struck without the compensation of Islam?

In all that I have written above, I have been giving expression to the doubts and questionings of my own mind; for I wish frankly to confess that I have no final solution to offer. A further consideration of great importance may be found from a review of the historical scene. The subject is a vast one, and it can only be outlined in this essay; but it seems to me to possess a vital historical value of the first order, if the theory I put forward is true.

When we regard human existence as a whole, we find that in those things of the spirit, which help forward the progress of mankind, life always makes its advances out of the primitive background by rhythmical tides, like the incoming currents of the sea. Only with difficulty, it gains and establishes each new advance,—here a little and there a little. As we watch the whole progress, we see often what appears for the time being a reversal in the tide of human life. But just when the set-back comes, there arises a new pressure from the vast deep, which urges the waters at some other point even beyond the old position. Each of these new pulsations seems to start from some far-away region in the rear; but each in turn carries forward some laggard portion of the human race.

Such surging upward, from the subconscious element in humanity into the conscious,—carrying the stream of the religious life forward, just when it was beginning to ebb,—seems to me to be a picture of the miracle of Islam in one of its deepest relations to human progress. It had just that creative element in it, that *élan vital* which humanity then needed. It reintegrated mankind.

Resemblances may be found in other epochs of human history. Christianity, starting from an out of the way corner of the Roman Empire, among fishermen and slaves and the despired race of Galilean Jews, must certainly have seemed,

at the time of its appearance, an altogether retrograde culture of the human race. Scholars and statesmen, like Tacitus and Pliny, regarded Christianity as a dangerous invasion of barbarism from within, similar to that which threatened the Empire from without. All the later classical writers unite in giving this description of it. Yet, in the end, (to continue a convenient metaphor) we can observe, how the silt, which it brought forward on its flood-tide, as it swept from East to West, fertilised Europe and carried with it new potencies of life. Islam bears, to me, something of this character in a later age, as representing a new life-giving current to mankind.

We can review the same process afresh, using another illustration. In Biology, we learn that there is always needed a continuous renewal of the human body, which goes on simultaneously with the elimination of waste tissue. Only in this way, can vitality be preserved; for the accumulation of waste matter clogs life itself and leads inevitably to decay and death. Even so, with the Body of Humanity, the deadness of each older civilisation needs to be sloughed off, like a skin outworn, if fresh life is to force its way up to the surface. And History reveals that there is no greater purifying and eliminating factor in human affairs than the uprush of a new religious impulse shaking the inner lives of masses of mankind.

Here, then, we have one potent reason for the startling rise of the religion of Islam from the heart of the Arabian Desert. For the Byzantine Empire with its effete provinces of Syria and Egypt, was falling into hopeless decay. In Persia, also, the Sassanian Dynasty was equally outworn and tottering. The keen breath of the desert air swept over both of these civilisations and they crumbled into dust.

Islam brought with it not only simplicity of living, but also a simplicity of faith. 'One God, one Brotherhood, One Faith.' This was a Puritan simplicity indeed, after the interminable wranglings over creeds which nobody understood and ceremonies which had lost all meaning! The idolatries, not only in Arabia, but in Christendom, were swept away. Life became one; life became simple. The poorest *fellahin* in Egypt and the most oppressed Syrian peasants found at least for a time a new

dignity of human brotherhood and common worship. The last words of the Prophet were cherished and remembered :

> Ye Muslims, your lives and property are sacred and inviolable among you. Treat your women well, for they are in your hands, and ye have taken them on the security of God. See that ye feed your slaves with such food as ye eat yourselves, and clothe them with the stuff ye wear yourselves. Know that every Muslim is the brother of every other. All of you are equal. Ye are all of one brotherhood. I have fulfilled my mission. I have left among you a plain command, the Book of God, and manifest ordinances, the which if ye hold fast ye shall never go astray.

The lives of the early successors of the Prophet carried out in daily practice to a remarkable degree the precepts quoted above. Their conduct was marked by a severity of ascetic fervour which made them able to realise in their own experience the poverty of the poor. They had faith in God and sought to do His will. In their biographies, equally with the abstemious life of the Prophet, we can see the true saving of grace of Islam. Whatever its later developments may have been, at the courts of Damascus and Bagdad, at Cairo and Cordova, at Bokhara and Constantinople, it is essentially a faith which drives men back to bare and simple truth, to puritan ideals, to the equality of believers, to simple submission to the will of God in daily life. No Musalman can escape that austere aspect of human affairs. It comes before him, year in, year out, in fast and prayer.

Let me take a somewhat debatable instance of the result in history of this puritan attitude. No one, of course, would condone the brutalities of the earlier Muhammadan invasions of India under Mahmud of Ghazni and his successors. Muslim historians in India have been the first to condemn them. But when we contemplate India as a whole to-day, in the North as well as in the South, we can see how, in certain matters that are vital and essential, the North of India has been truly purged by the presence of Islam from the accumulation of dead and decaying matter which was unwholesome and even poisonous. If the miasma of caste pollution and the grosser mists of idol worship have been lifted from the atmosphere of Northern India more than from the South, it is not a little due to the constant presence

of a faith that swept aside the luxuriant ritual growth that had encumbered the pure worship of the One God, and insisted at the same time that in His presence all believers are equal.

I will turn to a further aspect of world history, that has not yet received sufficient recognition. In Africa, for over a thousand years, Islam has been the only binding force to hold together Society at a stage beyond that of the fighting tribe. The unmitigated horror and abomination of cannibalism, the cruelties of head-hunting and devil worship, the sexual promiscuity and infanticide, which represented in earlier times the daily life of savage tropical Africa, have been wonderfully tempered and subdued by the advent of Islam. Long before the days of the European occupation, there were Islamic kingdoms, with a literary language and culture, in the heart of Central Africa. Their population, numbering many millions, became immeasurably advanced beyond the savage tribes around, who had never embraced Islam.

It may be truly said, that wherever Islam has penetrated the interior of Africa, with its faith in the essential brotherhood of all believers, it has raised the status and human dignity of those who have confessed it as a living faith. Furthermore, in spite of the immense differences between man and man in Africa, owing to sharp grades of culture, there has been no serious practical breach in the citadel of religious democracy, for which Islam pre-eminently stands,—no caste barriers, no race exclusion, no colour prejudice.

In the New World, the Christian powers of Portugal and Spain carried out a ruthless massacre, accompanied by a no less ruthless slavery of the aboriginal population. In the end, the primitive peoples were almost blotted out. France and Great Britain were hardly less relentless in their dealings with the Red Indians in the North. The records of the shooting down at sight of the "Black-fellow" in Australia, and the hideous indenture traffic called "black-birding" in Polynesia, are notorious for infamy. They have darkened and defiled the page of human history.

It is true that slave-raids, such as those which Livingstone witnessed in East Africa, were carried out by Muhammadan

dealers. Their cruelty was no less hideous than the things I have mentioned. These cannot be condoned any more than the slave traffic of the Christian merchants of Bristol and Liverpool, which stained with tracks of blood the whole of the West African coast. But even when all this is recorded, it will be seen that wherever Islam has spread among savage tribes, it has not led in the long run to their decrease in numbers. It has not blotted out whole peoples. The inhabitants have remained in virtual possession of the soil, ready to be raised in the scale of civilisation in the future.

One other factor needs to be specially noticed. The original impulse of Islam in breaking down the tribal units in Arabia and consolidating the whole Arabian Peninsula into one religious brotherhood has had its influence in ever wider and wider areas. It is true that some of the bitterest quarrels in the history of the world have been between rival Mussalman powers, just as the rivalry of Christian powers in the Middle Ages seemed at times to be all the more bitter and prolonged because of their common Christian background. Yet, in spite of these surface rivalries, the Khilafat doctrine, along with the doctrine of the Haj,—the pilgrimage to Mecca,—has had a consolidating influence in building up a unity and brotherhood which has crossed the barriers of nations and empires and has represented a world-wide movement within Islam. There can be no doubt that this new-found unity of brotherhood, whenever realised afresh, has given life to mankind.

Whilst, however, all this that I have mentioned is undoubtedly true and must be taken into careful account in any estimation of Islam, there is another fact which must not be overlooked. The brotherhood which Islam contemplates is always a brotherhood of believers. This relation of Muslims to fellow believers is separated off by a sharp cut line of demarcation from the Muslim relation to unbelievers. The law of brotherhood is for believers. "Know", said the Prophet, "that every Muslim is the brother of every other. All of you are equal. Ye are all one brotherhood."

Nothing could be more pronounced than this stress upon the unity of all believers. Nothing could be more significant

than the precise limitation of this unity to believers only. It is here more than anywhere else that I find difficulty in reconciling Islam, in its present form, with universal religion and universal brotherhood. It would appear as though a certain exclusiveness were involved within the very structure of the Islamic faith.

It is true that the spirit of brotherhood engendered by Islam not unfrequently oversteps the barriers of formal creeds and overflows to all mankind. The whole Sufi Movement in India has this ideal behind it. Such a true brotherly love I have myself experienced within the homes and hearts of Muslims, who have been more than brothers to me. But the division of human life between Muslims and non-Muslims seems almost fundamental both in Muhammadan law and social obligation. The fact that to-day in the Twentieth Century any non-Muslim who ventured openly within the city of Mecca would do so at the peril of his life, makes painfully clear how hard and fast the line is still drawn.

I am well aware that Christianity has flagrantly denied in action the principle of universal brotherhood which its creed professes. I am also aware that Islam has far more effectively solevd the race problem within its own borders than Christendom has done hitherto. Indeed, no apology for the Christian Church is possible as things stand to-day. The sin committed is against the light, and therefore it is all the greater. 'Race' Churches exist, in direct defiance of the will and spirit of the Founder of the Christian Faith. In the Southern States of North America and in South Africa the situation has become quite indefensible, and from the humane standpoint quite intolerable. Nevertheless the gulf of religion in Islam between believers and unbelievers is still unbridged, and there seems no way of bridging it except for the whole world to be converted to Islam.

With respect to the Islamic doctrine of the Unity of God I have no such criticism to offer. That is a supremely uniting and not a dividing faith. One of the greatest of all blessings which Islam has brought to East and West alike has been the emphasis which at a critical period in human history it placed

upon the Divine Unity. For during those Dark Ages both in East and West, from 600 to 1,000 A.D., this doctrine was in danger of being over-laid and obscured in Hinduism and in Christianity itself, owing to the immense accretions of subsidiary worships of countless saints and demi-gods and heroes. Islam has been, both to Europe and to India, in their darkest hour of aberration from the sovereign truth of God's unity, an invaluable corrective and deterrent. Indeed, without the final emphasis to this truth, which Islam gave from its central position, —facing India and facing Europe,—it is doubtful whether this idea of God as One could have obtained that established place in human thought, which is uncontested in the intellectual world to-day.

Furthermore, this divine truth which has thus been preserved by Islam is not merely an abstract postulate of scientific thought. Rather, it is the most vital of all experiences and the very soul of pure religion. More, perhaps, than anything else in Islam, it was this aspect of the Divine Unity which profoundly satisfied Raja Rammohan Roy. The note that is struck is a Puritan note. But throughout this essay I have come back again and again to the position, that it is as a purifying element in religion that Islam has brought the greatest benefit and blessing to mankind.

If I am able to do so, in a subsequent essay, I shall try to set down what appears to me to be the trend of the religious instinct in man as he looks out into the future.

THE REAL MEANING OF THE ISHOPANISHAD

By Srikrishna Sadashiv Gharpure.

Five years ago, a *shastri* friend of mine forced me, so to say, to read the Ishávásya Upanishad by myself, with what help I could get from the commentaries. Not much difficulty was experienced in going through the work; but what struck me and troubled me chiefly was the most objectionable character of the liberty which seemed to have been taken by Shankaracharya with the author while commenting on his work.

An honest reading between the lines is pardonable in a partisan or a propagandist; but to charge an author with false grammar of which he is not guilty, or to father on his words such meanings of their *synonyms* as the original words have not got, or to pretend to see a negative particle where the author has not used it, or to neglect some words as useless simply to bring out a meaning more to one's own liking, are artifices which should be below the dignity of even a partisan or a propagandist; to say nothing of an honest commentator, far less of a religious teacher.

This character of Shankaracharya's commentaries pained me greatly and I determined to do everything in my power to free the people from their effects, so far at least, as regards this excellent treatise; for, it is Shankaracharya whose opinions exercise the greatest influence on the people, and if these opinions had to be established, and have to be maintained, by such unfair means only, the sooner we get free from them the better!

But such dishonest commentary is not the only thing that I have to contend against in dealing with the Ishopanishad. In two places at least, I have been able to detect deliberate interpolations in the original text, which makes me rather suspicious about its genuineness in a few other places too. But I am unwilling to pose as a judge; the more so because in people's eyes I too may appear as a partisan. I therefore simply submit these two cases of interpolation to the scrutiny of Sanskrit scholars all over the world.

A. I shall take the case of the 8th mantra first, being the simpler of the two.

(1) By mere inspection one may easily see that the metre of this stanza requires 11 syllables in each line, and an additional one by way of poetical license, but never more than 12, all told. But the last line of this stanza contains no less than 17 syllables, a thing not to be expected of any poet, much less of the author of the Ishopanishad whose knowledge of grammar, logic and rhetoric is amply evidenced in this very treatise.

Against this objection of mine, it may be argued that lack of metre is the very charactaristic of the Yajurveda of which this treatise is a part. But it is one thing to say that, unlike the Rigveda which is all poetry, most portions of the Yajurveda are in prose; and quite another to charge its metre, where it is in verse, with being more faulty than that of the Rigveda.

(2) Secondly, there is also a positive side to my objection. In this extraordinarily long line, if we just omit the first extraordinary word of five syllables, the remaining line of 12 syllables is exactly such as to fit into the metre.

(3) Then, thirdly, neither the word *yáthátathyatah* nor any word of a similar composition is to be found anywhere in the Vedas properly so called, except in this *one* place, where, as I have said above, it is altogether useless either to make up the required number of syllables, or to complete the sense. Such abstract nouns formed from adverbs belong to the period of logomachy, far removed from the Vedic period.

(4) Fourthly, this long word is positively inconvenient here; not only to the measure, but also to the sense; and cannot be construed in the sentence, except as a useless appendage, or unless we resort to the questionable artifice of replacing the word *samáh* by its masculine synonym *samvatsaráh* and translate this latter by *prajápataya* which sense the original feminine noun *samáh* does never carry.

All these considerations, positive and negative, force me to conclude that the unusual word *yáthátathyatah* can not have been

used here by author, but has somehow come to be clapped into the text *in some after time.**

B. This anomalous condition of the 8th mantra led me to scrutinize the 2nd mantra which also, as it stands, presents considerable difficulty in construing.

Here, the first half of the mantra constitutes one whole independent sentence; the last quarter too is one whole independent sentence; of course, then, the remaining third quarter must make at least one whole sentence.

(1) But here, the most curious thing is, that there is no subject, though there is a formal finite verb. It is impossible that any good author, much less the author of the Ishavasya who, as I have said, evidently knew the science of grammar, logic, and rhetoric, could have left his verb without a subject.

(2) Then, on the other hand, there is another most curious thing about the function of the second-personal pronoun in this place. A second-personal pronoun in the locative case, without any connection, direct or indirect, either with the whole sentence, or as its part, is absurd in a context where both the preceeding and the following sentences have got no second-personal pronoun, or even a nominative of address for which a second-personal pronoun could be used or understood.

(3) Therefore, the locative case of the second-personal pronoun could not have been there in the author's original text. It could not have been in the objective as the verb is intransitive and could not take any object; it could only be in the nominative, especially as the verb wants a subject; the proper form of the word being *tvam* and not *tvayi*.

(4) Then, again, there is no reason why the verb should have been in the third person : there is no third-personal subject, mentioned or understood, to agree with it; and as the second-personal pronoun claims to have been in the nominative, and there is no other claimant to that place, evidently the verb in the text

*My pupil and friend, W. Altekar, late Fellow of the Philosophic Institute of Amalner, suggests that like the word **agne** in the second mantra of the fourth mandala of the Rigveda, or like the word **jushethám** in the fifth mantra of the 58th hymn of the same mandala, this word may have been written in the text here by some writer from the **tippanis** which, in many cases, have been found to indulge in giving synonymus or explanatory words, between the lines or words of the text, in addition to what may have been said in the commentaries separately.

ought originally to have been in the *second person*, the proper form of the word being *asi* and not *asti*.

(5) These readings would moreover remove the difficulty of the vitiated metre, which eixsts with the readings we now have got there, it being impossible for the two syllables in different pitches to merge into each other so as to be pronounced together as one syllable.

These five considerations, each in turn leading to others, force me to conclude that the present reading of the second mantra cannot have been the original one given by the author.

Of course, the disappearance of the original readings in this place and the appearance of the present ones in their place cannot have been quite accidental, or by any mistake on the part of a writer or copyist as the one in the 8th mantra. It appears to have been purposed. Nor need we go far to see the motive. The whole mantra is diametrically opposed to the teaching of the absolute necessity of giving up all action in order to obtain final bliss; and it could not admit of being twisted into the opposite sense like the first mantra; which, but for its twisting by Shankaracharya, does not convey a sense in favour of the doctrine of *sannyás*, but wholly supports the doctrine of the necessity of action.

It would not be out of place if I give a translation of the first mantra here for reference:

Whatever changing or perishable thing (*i.e.* a thing capable of being used) exists here in this world, belongs to an owner (whoever he be). Thou mayst enjoy or use it only when it is given up by the owner (by reason of the return thou mayst make for it). Never covet another's property.

Well, after the first mantra had been twisted, when the commentator interested in *sannyás* came to the second mantra, there was no escape from the doctrine advocating action,* the first half being undeniably explicit and the last quarter not less so. Of course, the universal negative in the last quarter could be toned down if the word *nare* could be taken away from its original connection and put into another. But it could be so

*In this paper, by action I mean all kinds of work, such as one does or can do in this life, and not action in the limited sense of religious acts done with a view to the fruit to be got in heaven, as all religiously minded people take it to mean.

taken away only if there were a word in the locative case to agree with it. The only proper word which could admit of a case termination in whole second half was the second personal pronoun. Could not a change of its case answer? Supposing the case changed into the locative, what other changes would it occasion? The second personal verb would no longer hold. It must be changed into the third person. Would there be then no difficulty about construing? None. For, both the adverbs *evam* and *nanyatha* do admit of an absolute construction of a verb with them (this however is not true). Of course no hesitation would answer,—the thing had to be done.

(6) The anomaly of the second-personal pronoun in the locative case without any connection in the sentence was felt by Uvat and some other commentators also. To help themselves through the difficulty they suppose that the third-personal verb in the first half of the mantra may be a mistake (euphemistically called *árshaprayoga*) for *jijivisheh*. I suspect that here too there may have been a deliberate change of *person* to ward off the suspicion which Shankaracharya, perhaps purposely, puts in the mouth of a pupil: "How could two different ways have been advised in two consecutive mantras without any preparatory or introductory device?" And, in the answer he, unlike Uvat, has indirectly maintained the third-personal verb as the proper one required.

There are two other places where I suspect purposed substitution of the one word *saha* for the two separate words *sah* and *ha* put in juxtaposition and together meaning "he alone"; which, too, as leaving no scope for any reservation in favour of *sannyás*, is no convenient reading for its votaries.

The *Ishávásya* Upanishad is, as I take it, a treatise on the *bráhma* religion or altruistic socialism, which aims at that higher *sannyás* which is advocated by the Bhagavat-gîta and which for its realization has to be co-ordinated with action. It shows how binding is the law of ownership, and how paramount is the necessity of continuous work in this life, work being the very essence of our life here, *as men*. The second half of the second mantra distinctly says: "Thus (*i.e.* by work and in work alone)

thou existeth and in no other way than thus; no action can cling to *man.*"

Of course living without work is a kind of suicide. The third mantra tells us how those who commit this suicide suffer. "They have to go to those places (in the life of mankind) which do not shine in light (*i.e.* which must have been meant for the evil beings) and are enveloped in dense darkness". Then two mantras follow and explain how the soul is not tarnished by action, as is often alleged. Then there are two mantras which describe the mental condition of the real workers which saves them from all evil effects of action; and then in the 8th mantra is described the nature of a hero (*i.e.* a worker) bodily and mental.

Then in three more mantras is explained the principle that neither mere action nor mere knowledge can save you from the places of dense darkness, described in the third mantra. To escape them, you must have recourse to *both* action and knowledge, each having influence on the other, and use them according to your need and with discretion. So also neither the production of things, nor abstinence from making them or from their destruction, can save you, single-handed, from those places of dense darkness. But to escape these and to achieve your end of everlasting life and conquest over death, you must resort to any or all of these at discretion, as you feel their need. This, in short, is the teaching of the *Ishávásya* Upanishad, and comprises the gist of our *bráhma* religion, as I am going to show after the question in this paper is settled.

In the fifteenth mantra the poet complains how truth is hidden from us by a dazzling outside cover (of the learning of the faddists by which we are deceived), and prays the life-god, the Sun, to help us to see the real principle of religion. That principle, the poet further asserts, is the unity of the soul which we see in all individuals; the body which makes one think oneself distinct from others being only a thing of the moment and actually reduced to ashes after death; whereas the Soul is all-pervading and everlasting

In conclusion, the poet offers a prayer on behalf of all people, praying Agni, the light god, "to guide us by the good

path to wealth and greatness, knowing as he does all arts, and to help us to fight the evils of crooked policy."

The keynote of the whole treatise is that it will not do for us to give up all action for the supposed fear of its taint. We must work constantly if we have to live a *Man's* life. The only thing that we have to do to escape the taint of action is to regard all beings as ourself and to treat them as such while working.

Will the great Sanskrit scholars all over the world look squarely into the matter and save this excellent treatise from its present condition of a handmaid to any and every principle that may find an *Acharya* to advocate it?

The specific questions to be decided are :

1. Is or is not the word '*yáthátathyatah* at the beginning of the 4th line of the 8th mantra, an addition of after times? (I think it is).

2. Are there or are there not any indications of the second mantra having been tampered with, as I suspect? If there are any, which was most probably the original reading?

(I think the original reading was :

Kurvanneveha karmáni jijivisheh shatam samáh,
Evam tvam nanyatheto'si nakarma lipyate nare.)

Scholars who think it worth their while to respond to my appeal and bring their best judgment to bear on these questions should please send their answers direct to me, within six weeks from the issue of this number. I shall collate all the answers together and send the result for publication in the next number.

My Post office address is :
Satara City, Bombay Presidency.

MUSIC AND LIFE

An autobiographical fragment.

By ROMAIN ROLLAND.

(Translated by Dr. Kalidas Nag.)

A small city in the province of France. A house on the bank of a canal. The silence of slow, empty days. Before the wall of the terrace, a heavy boat glides down, towed by a cord at its beak. The odour of a Venetian lagoon mixes with the perfume of hyacinth and carnation from the garden.

A thin, sickly child, living alone without comrades, dreams and looks forward to Life. Within him and around him Life sleeps. In the small city, men speak only of politics or of business, and women of domestic inanities or of supine piety. Overhead, the limitless sky, closing upon the four walls of the court-yard, brightens, glitters, darkens and rekindles itself, like a large eye whose lids rise and fall with an impassive and fascinating regularity.

Suddenly amidst that silence, in the immobile brightness of the sky and of the heart, a swarm of bees seems to fly past: Mother is playing a little melody of Haydn. I am no longer alone, my heart trembles with emotion. . . . O sweet little Friend, have you got your eyes, your lips? I do not know, but I know that I love you and that you love me.

I had in my home the old German music books. German? Did I know what that word signified? In my part of the country, I believe, no one ever saw a man from that land. Rarely would I hear any one speaking about the "Germans",—only of the Prussians; and I need not say that their name was not spoken tenderly.

But did I not seek those spirits who made that music? Were they not for me only music, only creations of Art? I opened the old music papers, I tried to spell them out, stammering, on the piano; and from it came forth souls without body, fragments of souls; the smiles, the thrills of the heart, which melt into

agony; the transports of love or of faith; the memories, the desires, calm and resplendent; happiness without cause, profound melancholy without reason.

I was barely conscious of those musical emanations, and yet they became my intimate friends. Those streamlets of life, those rills of music which bathed my whole being and infiltrated it through and through, seemed to disappear like the rain-water which the lovely Earth drinks up. But they penetrate its surface; they go to form underground the vast sheet of calm water, reserve-stores of love and life.

Since then life might have been mediocre, devoid of grand incidents, deprived of happiness and sympathy, but never could the Soul die of drought, the soul which had within itself the inexhaustible Spring.

Loves, sufferings, desires, capricious fantasies of Beethoven and of Mozart, you have become flesh of my flesh; I have absorbed you, you are mine, you are parts of me—mystery so differently mysterious from that of religion. A solitary soul had loved, dreamed, suffered, centuries ago. No one would know any longer what he was, really. Yet he is reborn in the heart of another solitary being who lives in another century, in a child as yet unconscious, bewildered, who does not know what all that means.

It is thus I feel, my German friends, that which palpitated in the heart of your old musicians. Had they been other than good, they might have ruined my soul; for they were masters of my self. . . . But what they have done me!

When as a child I was ill and feared that I would die—an old fear which, since then, I have forgotten partly through their help—such and such a phrase of Mozart seemed to keep watch over my pillow like a beloved Friend; I would have liked to have his hand in mine while dying, and to have him even in my tomb.

Later on, in the crisis of doubt and of negation which I passed through in my adolescence, some familiar melody of Beethoven has rekindled in me the spark of Eternal Life. Still later, when I felt weak, sad, persecuted, when I felt on me the crushing load of the hostile indifference of the world, I used to draw from the works of Wagner, a gigantic and joyous force

which helped me in marching on this world path. And always at any moment, whenever I feel my heart depressed and my spirit dried up, my piano is near me, I bathe in music, and always I come out young with a pure soul, fresh, full of illusion and hope.

While my heart was impregnated with your German music, my spirit followed a parallel path, different, quite French. I did not read German; my thought was nourished by French thought. My eyes, my intelligence, loved Latin beauty,—the harmonious lines, the clear ideas, the logic of dreams, the sovereign reason, the Light.

Thus two worlds were superimposed: the spirit wherewith I communed with my native soil, and, under that soil, the interior currents of water, the music, profound hidden soul, through which I was reunited not only with your soul of this present age but of past epochs. I have lived so much with your grandfathers that I feel sometimes that I may claim the title of their grandson more than many of you to-day.

And it so happened that one day, between that moving mass of obscure sentiments, of disembodied souls, and my French intellect, a passage opened up spontaneously, and the two worlds found themselves in contact. Then I had nothing else to do but to take cognisance of that which dreamed at the very depth of my being, and I found myself, as one says, to be a "Creator" of souls, without having thought about it. Those souls which I created, form a part of you, and I bring them back to you. . . .

Note—"Creator" is only a word. None of us is the real creator. The only Creatrix is the Eternal *Shakti*. —**R. R.**

(*For Translator's note see p. 80*)

SOME SANTAL SONGS

From the collection of S. C. Majumdar.

[*The Santals are one of the most important branches of the Kolarian people and are now to be found only in certain districts of West Bengal. Though in some respects Aryanised, they are still a simple, primitive and loveable folk. The songs, here presented in translation, have been collected from those actually sung by the communities living round about Santiniketan Asram, with which they are in intimate touch.*]

Do not play your flute, Badan, by the bank of the river.
Why trouble the water that lies beneath the rock?

* * *

Early in the morning, mother, I was going to fetch water,—
Looking back, I found someone had broken the young tips
of the castor-plant.
When I had taken my bath, sitting on the big slab of stone,
and washed my hair,
I peeped into the water, and saw my shadow.
My youth has passed away!

* * *

Father, you dug a pool at the bend of the road across our village.
On its banks you planted trees of *tagar* flowers.
Father, I also have grown up like those trees;
But while their flowers have faded, this blossom of yours
is trembling in the breeze.

My sweetheart has his decoration of gold, and his ornaments
of silver.
Their vision haunts my mind.
Let me hang my dreams high up on the branches
of the tamarind tree at our door;
For they make me neglect my sweeping of our courtyard.

* * *

The tamarinds are swaying to the breeze in the orchard,
The mango branches are heavy with their clusters of fruit.
Come, mine own, to eat mangoes at our place;
I left my full pitcher by the pool in the sands,
to hasten to you, love, when I saw you coming.

* * *

There's a voice and a smile in the *banam*,* Muni,
There's a heart in the flute.
I am in your heart, Muni, and you are in mine.
On the webs floating in the sky, which bind everything together!

* * *

Numberless are the *mahua* trees in our land,
Their flowers they keep dropping through the day
and in the evening.
The breeze is envious, the sun is languid,—
What harm, my love, if in this day of the hot wind
You do not gather *mahuas*?

* * *

I have no girl of my own age here, unwedded still am I.
Needs must I go from here to some other land;
Or let me rather lean against a tree, raising my eyes
to the moon,
Entreating him to find me my mate.

---

*A kind of fiddle.

My mother is dead and so is my father.
Who is there to call me: "Come and sit here, child"?
There's only the plantain tree in our courtyard.
It is my father and my mother as well,—
It calls me: "Child, come and sit here!"

* * *

Many of us are we, thick like a cluster of trees.
Grandly do we beat our drums, grandly do we dance,
swaying our limbs.
The women, they have to leave the babies in their arms,
to come and join us!

* * *

O mother, the drums, little and big, sound in the village.
As I listen and yearn, listen and yearn,
My body rocks like a lotus leaf on the water.

* * *

The river bank is full of *kambir* flowers
The day wears on as I climb its steep side,
The night grows dark as I gather the blossoms,
The sun rises while I weave them into a garland.

* * *

My parents are like the moon,
My brother and sister are like the stars.
I was born under the yellow *sirguja* blossoms,
And my name is little Sunflower.

HOW JAPAN CAME TO ACCEPT THE WEST.

It was a curious example of social embryology that Japan should have assumed atavistic forms before its rebirth.

Our Unionist party consisted of men of advanced thought who considered that the unity of Japan should be accomplished at any cost, and that the crisis through which we passing involved international as well as national problems. Second to none in their adoration of the Mikado, they worked for the full restoration of his sovereignty; but their theory of administration, in returning to the democratic ideas of ancient China, stretched further back into antiquity than those of the other parties.

European and American republics, as at first understood by our scholars, reminded them curiously of the Golden Age of the Celestial Land. Untutored as yet in the darker side of western politics, they fell into exstacies over those achievements of modern nations which seemed to them an actualisation of their own ideals. In George Washington they saw the Emperor Yaou of China relinquishing his throne to the ablest citizen. Montesquieu, with his triune theory of Government, was hailed as the Book of Mencius.

So, far from despising the West, the Unionist patirots laid themselves at its feet. It was not the novelty but the similarity of what they found that attracted them. Sakuma-Shozan first proposed to the authorities the employment of European instructors in all branches of study. He was also the first Japanese who adopted European costume. This idiosyncracy of dress was actuated by a love of symbolism. Our kimono meant leisure, while the European costume meant activity, and it became the uniform of the army of progress, like the *chapeau rouge* in revolutionary France. Now-a-days a reaction has set in, and native dress is more generally worn by the progressives.

Sakuma-Shozan paid dearly for his pro-foreign leanings: he was assassinated at Kioto in 1866. Yet, despite conservative antagonism, western knowledge became more and more sought after as time advanced, until it has now become an inherent part of our national culture.

It must always be remembered, however, that our original movement towards the acquirement of foreign knowledge was fostered by the historic spirit.

—Okakura.

NOTES AND COMMENTS.

By RABINDRANATH TAGORE.

From an address to the Indian Community in Japan.

Though I uphold the fundamental unity of the Asiatic mind, I must confess I do not believe in any characteristic which is exclusively Oriental, bearing no intimate relation to the western mind. All great human ideals are universal,—only in their grouping, emphasis and expression do they differ from one another. It is therefore necessary, while developing our individual character, to come into close contact with other races which may view from their own standpoint that truth which is also truth for us, but which has with us a special interpretation due to our special experience.

It is the mission of all great countries to complete their view of truth, not by merging their characteristics in those of another people, but by revealing their own personality. There can only be a co-ordination of truth, when the differences in the human world are cultivated and respected.

It is a momentous fact that you, my countrymen, for whatever purpose you may have come, have formed a community in this land. Through you, India must speak to Japan; and if possible the fact of your coming must be a glorious fact. Therefore, you must have a bond of unity among yourselves to give you a personality through which you will be able to communicate with Japan. If that is neglected, then you may return home with a full purse, but leave a gaping emptiness behind.

I have observed in some of you an attitude of mind, which is neither civil nor sympathetic. I have seen some among you, who take pleasure in dwelling on the dark side of the people among whom you have come to live. By this you are not acquiring anything of real value, but rather depriving yourselves

of the great pleasure which comes from appreciation. We all have our dark side; we in India also have our failings. If we wish to find fault, let us go back to our country and correct our own faults from inside, as kinsmen among kindred. Foreigners are always apt to distort and exaggerate. You know how the missionaries, when they criticise us in their own country, pick out the faults in our conduct and represent them out of proportion because they very often deliberately forget to temper them with our merits.

I know that the Englishman who, when he judges his own country, has a complete view of the personality of the people, rarely keeps this wholeness of judgment when he is outside his native land. He is intolerant of differences which may be quite inoffensive, but which for him become a grievance. He feels irritated when he hears English spoken by a foreigner with a wrong accent, or when he sees something peculiar in dress and manners to which he is not accustomed. I hope you will not cultivate such insularity of judgment and imagine yourselves to be superior to the people amongst whom you live, only because you are different from them.

For myself, I have come to discover something very great in the character of Japan. I am not blind to their faults. You may remember that when I first came to this part of the world I wrote a number of lectures upon Nationalism, which I read in the United States of America. The reason why these thoughts came to me in Japan was because it was here that I first saw the Nation, in all its naked ugliness, whose spirit we Orientals have borrowed from the West.

It came vividly before my eyes, because on the one hand there were the real people of Japan, producing wonderful works of art, and in the details of their life giving expression to inherited codes of social behaviour and honour, the spirit of *Bushido*: On the other hand, in contrast to the living side of the people, was the spirit of the Nation, arrogantly proud,

suffering from the one obsession, that it was different from all other Asiatic peoples.

Japan was faced with the most difficult trial of suddenly being startled into power and prosperity and had begun to show all the teeth and claws of the Nation, which have been demoralising the civilised world, spreading far and wide an appalling amount of cruelty and deception. I could not specially blame Japan for this, but I heartily deplored the fact that she, with her code of honour, her ideal of perfection and her belief in the need for grace in everyday life, could yet become infected with this epidemic of selfishness and with the boastfulness of egotism.

I frankly confess that I was then deeply mortified. For, though the people of Japan, on this first occasion, accepted me with enthusiastic welcome in the beginning, yet directly they came to know the ideas that I had, they felt nervous. They thought that idealism would weaken their morale; that ideals were not for those nations who must be unscrupulously strong; that the Nation must never have any feelings of disgust from the handling of diplomatic filth, or of shrinking from the use of weapons of brutal power. Human victims had to be sought, and the nation had to be enriched with plunder.

Nevertheless, I did not blame Japan for considering me to be dangerous. Though I felt the hurt of this evil, yet at the same time I knew that beneath the iron mail-coat of the Nation the living spirit of the People had been working in secret. To-day I feel sure that these people have the promise of a great future, though that may not be evident in the facts of the present. Truth is often hidden behind the obstacle of facts. Let me give you an instance from history.

Nobody can doubt that Europe has always had her great intellectual strength of mind. She shuns exaggeration, and seeks accuracy in dealing with the material world. She has dominated the whole of mankind to-day with a marvellous vigour and clearness of thought. But you will remember a time when

her people believed in witchcraft and tortured inoffensive women. They burnt Giordano Bruno for his greatness of genius, made it impossible for Galileo to speak out the truths of astronomy, and caused men to suffer unspeakable bodily pain when suspected of holding opinions a little more rational than the religious creed which it was held right and proper for them to believe. If you had built your theory of the European mind upon the facts of those days, Europe would have appeared the darkest place in the world, where freedom of thought was considered dangerous, and freedom of conscience impious. Yet even through these facts the vigorous intellect of Europe was all the time at work, silently and secretly.

I warn you never to rely on facts, to beware of keeping a superstitious faith in them. The truth which works in the obscure depth of facts is not obvious. It is like the underground stream of water, the fact of whose existence is contradicted by the rude rocks on the surface. One needs a power of vision and sympathy in order to discover the truth which is the innermost creative force of a people. I feel it strongly that we in India have many things to learn from Japan, if only we can be humble. Even those things in their civilisation which we cannot accept and admire, we ought to be able to understand, by viewing them in their proper place and perspective, and not by fixing them against the background of our own tradition and sentiment.

In every society there are elements that are not beautiful, but which are excusable when we know them in their full context. Therefore I ask you, my countrymen, be humble, be simple; avoid the critical attitude of the school-boy, and bring once more to this shore the true India, the India which was lovable herself, and which therefore could love others.

I deem myself fortunate in having noted this time certain characteristic truths in the Japanese race, which I believe will work through their subconscious mind and one day produce great results in a luminous revelation of their soul. Let me offer a few

sketches from the notebook of my memory which may give you a picture of their spirit.

Nine years ago, when I was living at Mr. Hara's house in Yokohama, it struck me everyday, in his beautiful garden, how working men would be coming out of the factories at midday and walking for a considerable distance to sit under the shade of his pine forest, silently to watch the meeting of the great sea and the sky for some five minutes, as though it were food and drink to them, and then walking all the way back to their work. This is a great achievement, that the whole people of the land should come to have a hunger for the beauty that is serene and great, that has no appeal to their sensual excitement; a beauty with which, in the busiest time of the day, they could steep their mind, and thus realise their freedom in the Infinite.

On every Saturday and Sunday, men, women and children would crowd through the different alleys and avenues of pines and oaks, threading their way to some open space in the mellow light of the afternoon. There was no sign of rowdyism, no trampling of grass or plucking of flowers, no strewing of the forest path with the peel of bananas, skins of oranges, or torn pieces of newspaper. There was no unseemly scene, no brawling drunkenness, no shrieking laughter, no menacing pugnacity.

These people belonged to the working classes. In other countries, we know what is the foundation of the enjoyment of such people, what strong sensations they need,—sensations which shew the insensitiveness of a mind which has to be roused by all kinds of rude jerks and shocks. But here, their holiday time seemed to me like the perfect flower of the lotus open to the pure light of the sky, to which they came like a joyous swarm of bees to sip the hidden honey in silence. This meant something great in the people and it won my heart.

It filled me almost with envy, as I wished for my own people such a fine gift of enjoyment. Have you no admiration for this marvellous achievement of theirs? It is this profound feeling for beauty, this calm sense of perfection, that is expressed in various ways in their daily conduct. The constant exercise of patience in their daily life is the patience of a strength, which

revels in the fashioning of exquisite behaviour with a self-control that is almost spiritual in its outward expression.

One day I was travelling in a motor car through the country, when we came upon a lumbering market cart which obstructed the way. What struck me specially was the patience of the motor driver. He uttered not a single rude word, but waited for a long while in perfect composure of mind and expression, until the cart could give him right of way. Each driver then saluted and we passed on. On another occasion, our motor car, by a mistake of the driver, knocked against a bicycle, and threw down the rider. In spite of his bruises he spoke not a word of recrimination, nor did he even refer to our driver's mistake. He simply got up, wiped the blood from his cheek, and rode away as if nothing had happened. This little incident represented a great fact.

In a variety of ways, I have seen in the conduct of the Japanese their wonderful self-control, and what seems to be a sense of forgiveness, or at least of mutual understanding. In the cases I have mentioned, both parties made silent allowance for each other's mistakes. This is not easy. It has required strenuous discipline and centuries of civilisation. I have travelled all over the world, and yet if I compare this with what prevails elsewhere, or in India, I shall have to confess that the Japanese possess a monopoly of certain elements of heroism,—a heroism which is one with their artistic genius. In its essence, it has a strong energy of movement; in its form, it has that perfect proportion which comes of self-mastery. It is a creation of two opposing forces, that of expression and that of repression.

I have often asked myself, how these special qualities of the Japanese originated.

Nature in Japan offers many contradictions in her physical aspect, which balance one another. On the one hand, there is an exuberance of vegetation, but not being in a tropical country this is under control. In our country, the forest has a dense undergrowth, in which weeds find the same indulgence as the great fruit-bearing trees. In a tropical climate, extravagant nature

finds no check in her exaggeration. In Japan, hard rocks and well-irrigated soil, the rich earth and the cold climate that does not tolerate utter intemperance of life, are found together; and they keep a balance between the different impulses of nature.

Improvident wealth becomes vulgar in its display of profusion. Only there, where wealth of strength and material combines with modesty of manifestation, does richness of truth find beauteous form. Nature in Japan has such cadence born of contradiction. Everywhere there is the contrast,—on the one hand of her hills, silent and motionless, and on the other, of her dancing streams, full of laughter. Surrounding her slim figure is the sea with its perpetual lure of adventure for men; while the rich fertility of her lowlands, tended by the rain from the sky and the rivers from her hill-sides, has its message of the settled life of agriculture, maintained by a complex code of moral obligation, mutual understanding and forbearance.

Out of all this, has been built a society contrary to the predatory civilisation, which for its food and materials depends upon exploitation, forcible or cunning. Her sea gives her children courage and curiosity for new experiences; it has made them familiar with the mutability of life. Not having the idea of stability in her earth, which has its seat upon the restless shoulders of the demon Earthquake, the close neighbourhood of life and death has constantly been made evident to her children. The play of sudden changes, terrible in might, against the background of a unique world of beauty, tender and yet majestic, has made her mind easily adaptable to new ideas, all the while keeping her own personality pure and firm, imparting to new thoughts her own meaning, and to new forms her own magic of beauty.

There is a further contrast in the field of the mind. Buddhism is a religion which calls to meditation and introspection, to self-control and self-emancipation, repression of passion and cultivation of sympathy. In opposition to this, owing to their cold climate and hilly country, to their need of intensive effort for producing the necessities of life within the narrow boundaries of her islands, a vigorous mentality has been developed in her children, and their character has been moulded into a greatness in which are mingled self-confidence with self-

mastery, force of decision with grace of skill, love of existence with forgetfulness of death, active courage with patient considerateness.

These people have thus come to believe in a heroism which is not in self-exaggeration, but in a resigned spirit that can quietly accept either action or inaction, as honour or duty might dictate. Therein lies the beauty of their strength; it is in that detachment of mind, which does not forget the ideal of excellence in its greed and hurry for result. When I first saw their flower decoration, on my former visit to Japan, they told me how a great hero in their history had said that the contemplation of it helped him in his fighting. That is to say, perfect heroism finds its inspiration in the music of truth which is in beauty.

The convulsive and artificial cult of self-mutilation Japan has never accepted as a means of attaining virility, or spiritual excellence; for she has received her lesson from nature's own teaching. She knows that in the tenderest of life's manifestations there is not only more strength, but also more heroism, than in the rugged asceticism of the rocks. The real strength is not in the vast desert, but in the green grass, whose triumphant life survives the trampling march of time in an endless resurrection of beauty. Our character shows its weakness when it confuses rudeness with strength; when it is self-assertive in its stark ascetisism. Our self is given to us to bring it into harmony with our soul by giving it the immortality of perfection, not by killing it and thus impoverishing the soul herself. Our heroism finds its true foundation in the enrichment of soul which comes of the enrichment of self. For, in the perfection of form dwells the perfection of spirit.

Japan must prove to the world that the present utilitarian spirit may be wedded to beauty. If Science and Art, necessity and joy, the machine and life, are once united, that will be a great day. At present, Science is shamelessly dissociated from Art. She is a barbarian, boastful of her immense muscle and superficial nature. But has she not come at last to the gate of

the truth, which gives us the mystery of the beautiful? Has she not proved that it is Rhythm itself which is in the heart of Reality? She has suddenly stumbled upon the dance-music of creation. It has been revealed to her, that every atom is a ring-dance of lights round a luminous centre. Only a difference in their dance measure is responsible for the difference in the elements. It is through the chain of these varied dances, which are the cadence of beauty, that this universe of Reality has its play in the courtyard of time and space. Any torture of the chain of beauty, any break in it, is evil; because it hurts the very spirit of reality, which is one in its physical appearance and in its moral and spiritual meaning. By killing the best expression of reality, which is beauty, we enfeeble its soul which is moral and spiritual.

Though we often find in the Japan of to-day a hysteria of violence in her politics, an unscrupulous greed in her commerce, and an undignified lack of reticence in her public life, which makes us anxious for the moment, yet let us feel certain that all these have been borrowed from the outside, that they have no deep root in her mind. Let us hope that the truth which they have in their inner being, will work through all contradictions and express itself through unaccountable ways in some sudden outbreak of revelation.

Great periods of history are periods of eruption, unlooked for and seemingly against the times, but they have all along been cradled in the dark chamber of the people's inner nature. The ugly spirit of the market has come from across the sea into the beautiful land of Japan. It may, for the time, find its lodging in the guest-house of the people; but their home will ultimately banish it. For it is a menace to the genius of her race, a sacrilege to the best that she has attained and must keep safe, not only for her own salvation, but for the glory of all humanity.

VISVA-BHARATI BULLETIN.

I

Rabindranath's Farewell to Milan.

The first welcome of hospitality in this country has come to me from Milan, whence it was proposed I should begin my tour in Italy. The very few days I have been able to spend here were made so overflowingly full with the generosity of kindness, that they have brought Italy close to me and given me a feeling that I have known her for long.

It is a rare privilege for a stranger to find the heart of a great country open to him, without having wearily to wait and repeatedly to knock at the gate. How I have deserved this honour I know not, but I know how to appreciate it and cherish it in my memory.

I take my farewell of Milan with an inner assurance that I shall find my seat ready in a warm corner of her heart when I come back,—which will be before long, if my own wish be realised.

II.

Note on Romain Rolland's autobiographical fragment.

By Dr. Kalidas Nag.

(see p. 64.)

Thanks to the spirit of perennial self-purification in Man, even this age of discords has its incarnations of Harmony. Rabindranath and Romain Rolland have thundered, with simultaneous prophetic voice, against its lamentable backsliding, its atavistic regression of culture. Yes, there is harmony in this thunder. Read *Nationalism* and *Creative Unity ;* read *Au-dessus de la mêlée* and *Empedocle d'Agrigente.* We need not despair for Humanity so long as there are such individuals who believe in human fellowship as the base-note of History.

But neither Tagore, nor Rolland, is a musician by accident or necessity. No doubt as champions of internationalism and peace, their dominant musical note sounded above the pandemonium of world politics ;

no doubt they are honoured in the republic of letters as Master Harmonists ; no doubt music is the supreme passion with both of them ; yet music is much more to Tagore and Rolland,—it is the soul of their art creations, the very essence of their being.

Tagore sang long before he learnt to lisp in rhyme, and throughout his life music remains to him his supreme consolation. His *Gitánjali* (Song-offerings), his *Giti-málya* (Song-garlands) are song wooings of his Divine Lover. To understand Tagore the poet, or Tagore the prophet, one must understand Tagore the musician. Through music he soars above the suffocating atmosphere of current history, the region of deadly actuality, and wafts us to the heaven of Eternal Harmony.

By quite a different path, following a different line of evolution, Romain Rolland reaches the same vantage ground over current history. Initiated into the mysteries of music by his gifted mother, the one dream of Rolland's life has been to interpret humanity in terms of music. In spite of all the tragic cruelty of his life, Rolland never for a moment deviated from the path of his musical *abhisára,* the lover's quest of the Supreme Harmony.

While still a boy, Rolland would go every day from Paris to Versailles, just to translate his joys and sorrows, his dreams and aspirations, on the piano of a friend, for he could not afford to have an instrument of his own. He was not able to consecrate his life to music, and fulfiil the cherished dream of his life to become a composer himself. Nevertheless he perservered in his passionate quest, to emerge as the greatest musical critic of his age,—nay more than a mere critic,—a revealer, a creator.

The first to be appointed a professor of Musical History, Rolland devoted ten years of his life (1902-1912) to the proper elucidation and appreciation of music through his erudite and illuminating lectures before the Paris University. His opening lecture "About the place of Music in general History", was as much an original reading of History as of Music.

So it is in the fitness of things that Romain Rolland should be the first to harmonise the jarring notes of modern history into a supreme musical creation in his *Jean Christophe* a veritable epic of modern life ; unique alike in amplitude and intensity are its improvisations on Life and Death, Love and Immortality, with their equal distribution of glamour

and gloom, of lyric moonbeam and epic thunder,—a tenth symphony (the unfulfilled dream of Beethoven) achieved by this Beethoven of Romance.

That is why, even amidst the terrible depression of this crisis in Civilisation we may gather courage to sing with the immortal creator of Jean Christophe :

—Thou shalt be born again. Take rest. There is nothing but one heart for all. The smile of the night and of the day embrace each other. O Harmony, august marriage of Love and Hatred! I sing to the God with the two powerful wings : Victory to Life! Victory to Death!

III

The Soul of the East.

(*Rabindranath to the Japanese Passengers on Board the S-S "Suwa-Maru".*)

My friends, it is unfortunate that the medium of lauguage between us is a foggy medium, which makes it difficult for me to give you a clear idea of what I have in my mind about your country, which I have just visited. It is in any case, always a delicate thing for a foreigner to tell his host what he thinks of him,—especially where he has been so generously welcomed and entertained. I recognise that the desire, which you have to know what a visitor thinks about your country, is natural and does not come from any longing for flattery on your part. We realise what we are, through understanding how we react upon others, and then only do we truly know ourselves ; so I sympathise with you in your wish to know my own impressions about you.

You must first of all consider, that a man who comes to a foreign land is bound to carry with him his own traditional habits of thinking and his prejudices, of whatever kind they may be. We none of us bring a clean slate. We already have some opinions from our reading books that are far from accurate, and from our own bias and personal habits ; and, therefore, you cannot accept such opinions as final, and have to make allowances for personal temperament.

We very often criticise other people from a standpoint that is wrong and inadequate ; like a man, habituated to the use of curved scimitars, who complains of the shape of scabbards made for straight swords ; or a traveller, who has only known a horse for a steed, finding an elephant unmannerly because of the length of his nose ! In a strange land, where

we see strange things, we have hardly any standard of judgment. But we should not exaggerate this side of the matter over-much ; for, being human all of us, in whatever country we may live, we can understand one another in spite of barriers ; and I truly believe that I have been able to understand Japan. When I say this, I simply mean that I have been able to love your people. That proves conclusively that I have found something positive, not accidental ; something universal, not merely ephemeral. Love itself is perfect understanding.

I have often noticed that European visitors try to see in you something similar to themselves, and when they observe how well you have managed to handle things borrowed from the West—railways, telegraphs, post offices, and the like—they express their satisfaction. I have read a remark made by an English traveller, that Japan according to him does not belong to the 'East', nor China ; they are almost 'Western'. Only India it would appear, is truly in the Orient. This traveller came with his own bias and critical intellect : and through that he saw all that he saw.

Well, I must confess that I have brought with me, to the Far East, my Eastern mind with its own vision. It is not scientific it is not analytical. I could not help judging you with that mind of mine, which belongs to Asia. I tried to find out what you are, and not what you have, not what you could borrow from the West. What difference did I find between the Western point of view and that of the East? That is the question I had to put before myself ; and I would like to give you the answer which I found.

I think that we, in the East, have more faith in personality, in human relationship. All our attachments are keenly personal, human. Science deals with the impersonal, the non-human, the mechanical, the things that can be weighed and measured and tabulated. These are useful things, no doubt. Through them we can organise our forces better in certain respects than through mere personal ways, producing accurate, standardised articles by the million, every one of them monotonously the same. That makes you think you have got the exact thing and feel that you are not cheated.

It may be that, in our Eastern countries, people have not such sense of accuracy in external things, of which we, therefore, often make a mess and thereupon win laughter from the West, which concludes that we are not worthy of any great responsibility because we cannot master their

machine. But one fact we must remember and try to find out its significance, namely, that all the oldest and longest civilizations have been Eastern.

Great Greece only lived a very short time. Great Rome is now nowhere. We find immense vicissitudes among modern Western nations, which even now, are in such a condition, that we cannot be satisfied as to their permanence.

But on the other hand, look at China. It is easy to say that her central government is fearfully mismanaged, but we must acknowledge that the people are living, are civilized, are peaceful, in their relations to one another, and acknowledge their obligations to their surrounding neighbours with a high code of social ethics, handed down from the past. China is the oldest civilisation. There must be some meaning in this. It cannot be accidental. Truth only survives. Anything that is untrue dies. When we find a people with a long and continuous history, we must know that it has found some elixir of life. Even their drawbacks prove their vitality ; for they show that China was able to survive in spite of them all. Could you imagine any other nation suffering from such political mistakes, corruption and maladministration, and not being broken into pieces? But China shows no sign of final dissolution. Deep in the heart, she has the living human personality ; and to this, chiefly, she owes her wonderful vitality.

"Well," I said to myself when I saw all this, "here is the secret of the East. The mystery of Everlasting Life the East did solve and here is the solution." I tried, when I came to Japan, to find out if you also had found this solution.

It is tautology to speak of "man" as "human ;" but it contains a profound truth. For it is 'man' that is all important, it is 'man' who lives, not the machine. If any nation has this gift of conserving its human relations, then that is life, enternal life ; for that is man's truth, man's ideal, man's goal—not railways, factories and machinery, but humanity. So I asked myself concerning the Japanese, when I came to your country : "Are they human ; or are they merely efficient? Are they mere organisers, efficient organisers like the West, or are there beneath all these borrowed feathers human hearts?"

You will notice that metaphor about 'borrowed feathers.' Feathers do not produce a voice. Voice comes only from life itself. That English traveller, who wrote his book on Japan, saw the complexion of your

borrowed feathers and said: "How marvellous!" But he did not hear your living voice, for he had not the faculty wherewith to hear what comes from the heart of Japan. I hope I have heard it, and it gladdened my heart more than I can possibly say. I found your soul. That which is external,—your science, your organisation,—that you got from your school-masters. But that is not you. It is the 'human' element, that is you. It is the 'human' touch that gives life.

In China, foreigners fix their tentacles round this huge unwieldy people. They are all ready to suck out its life blood. Some on the other hand, are trying their spells—their fascination of benevolence. Poor China is in a sorry plight. But I felt that China was really living in those of her people, who had never been to Harvard; had never seen sky-scrapers; had never used the word Democracy. How close to nature they are, and so how living! This closeness to nature is their life. It accounts for their permanence.

Wonderful words I listened to in China. Wonderful words they were which ancient China taught. And side by side with them, I listened also to those who had their western education. I cannot describe to you my surprise at the words of one of them who wished to empty a beautiful lake, in the midst of the College grounds, and turn it into a 'campus.' Fancy! This from a Chinese, who had inherited the gift of life, not from any machine, not from the West, but from the perfect rhythm of nature which his forefathers had mastered. This speech about turning the lake into a campus, coming from a Chinese, was tragic.

As I watched the Chinese, I found that everything they produced, with their marvellous fingers, was a marvel of beauty. I said: "Oh what a great civilisation this must be, not what the West has called 'progress', but the true civilisation." I had the same feeling about Japan. I saw the shadow of the West lengthening. I saw beauty being swallowed up by western ideas. You are also using these words about 'progress' which the West has taught you. But, when I came closer, I found the same deeply human touch. It is a creative spirit that you have. For it is in this human element that creation lies. The machine is not creative.

Japan can never forget her creative gift, which she has received from of old. 'I do not mean merely your artistic gift; most certainly I do not mean at all those things you borrow and intimate. There you make awful blunders. Whenever I have seen those imitations. I have wondered how your feeling of beauty could so desert you that your choice in such things

should always go astray, and the result be so often ludricous, third-rate, wrong in every way.

But when you handle your own things, there is ever that efficiency which is graceful, which is living. For you have the peculiar proficiency which has grace in it as well as utility. To take one example only,—when you offer a gift to anyone, the care you take about it, and the way you offer it, make it beautiful. This shows that you are not in haste. You have leisure for the little gracious acts that are human.

Men in haste want to multiply profit. Profit is good in its place. But man is man, and not merely a profit-making automaton. The man who goes on making profits, until he drops down dead in the counting-house,—what beauty, what humanity, is there in his life? Such persons are more like dolls, having one movement only which they repeat, never coming to any final meaning at all.

This ludicrous 'efficiency', which the West has cultivated to the utmost pitch, is doing such enormous mischief, that it is going to be the death of Man some day. If the machine is at last triumphant, man will be crushed. But I have felt in Japan, in spite of this superficial aspect, a deep human touch in your relationship. You acknowledge personal relationships everywhere. Your government is not a mere Government, but a Person ; because your whole civilisation is personal.

Things are going wrong in China. Everywhere they acknowledge personal responsibility yet they say that in the centre they must have some bodiless ghost, some abstraction, called a Republic, from the West. It is all right for the West,—this so-called Republican Government. They do not want personality, they want efficiency. China does not say that. Nay, she says, rather, that the human is to be at the origin, in the middle, and everywhere ; and her whole civilisation proclaims the triumph of the human. Yet, obsessed by her western schoolmasters, China has insisted on becoming a Republic.

As I have said, a republic may be all right in its place ; but not where civilisation is all-varied in mutual obligation. There is, in China and Japan, a whole nervous system of such mutual obligation. You cannot trifle with that. It is a great gift. It is the wonderfully complicated and delicate nervous system which makes the human body one. So with the Eastern civilisation. It is this nervous system of the body-politic based on mutual obligation, which makes for its unity. All classes are bound in the East not by contract, but by this inner living bond of unity.

This has given the Eastern Civilisation its humanity ; and because of this it has produced great ideals. We are grateful to the West for its Science, but all the great religious Ideals, which save our human nature from wreckage, have sprung from the East, because in the East we believe in the person, not in the machine. We therefore only make ourselves a laughing stock when we copy the West. But our Eastern hearts are touched at once, when we meet with human kindness.

I must confess to you, I am very nervous in the West. I have never yet got quite over my stage fright. I was paid so much to lecture and was treated accordingly, as though I was to do everything according to a contract, in an inhuman business relation, and the suffering was enormous. But from the first lay that I entered your country—even before then, on board the steamer,—I was truly your guest. Directly you asked me to come and lecture, I had your hospitality. How nice it was, how kind, how human.

You might easily have said : "We are going to pay this man so many dollars. It is all on contract. And if we don't like what he says we can laugh and shout him down and tell him to go back." But this could never happen in Japan or China. Do not think I merely spoke nice things about you. Sometimes I spoke severe things, because I loved you. I felt I had the right to do so, the right of love. When you committed crimes, I spoke out. I said : "Let these people of the West have their triumph Let us suffer in silence, but never let us copy them in their inhumanity. Behave always as your true selves." You might, in answer to their insults, have produced some Klu Klux Klan,—I hardly know how to pronounce the name. But you did not.

Be gentle, be patient ; for that will save you ; that will make you live ; that will give you life everlasting,—not machine guns, not poison gas, not bomb-throwing-aeroplanes ; in the end, man will only survive where he is human, and not where he is demoniacally making profits. No. Let us, at least, have respect for humanity, and let us not follow in the wake of those who are not so much concerned in nourishing and protecting the truth of Man, as in the so-called interests of what they call their Nordic Race.

Let them rule. But we shall gain our rights of sovereignty in a higher world than theirs,—in the spiritual world. There the East has ruled the West in the past, through its great spiritual leaders. Now, even

in that there is a downfall in the West, and the spiritual leadership of the East is acknowledged no longer.

But let us accept our moral responsibility as Asiatics. Say with pride that you are not of the West ; that you believe in Dharma more than in profit-making. I have seen that you in Japan have this greatness. If, I did not see it I should hold my head down. You have your loyalty to man, your love for man, you have infinite patience in little things. All these, and many others, are human traits. They will make you great,—not scientific toys and dressed-up dolls from the West.

I do not belittle the West. Truth is very valuable, and the West has given to us new intellectual truth. But a Devil may make use of it ; and science has lost its divinity through the handling that the West has given it. They have made you swallow drugs, moral and material even when you wanted to avoid them. They have imposed insults on you which it will take generations to forget.

Therefore the East must stand firm. The East must exercise her own judgment and reject the encroachment of the inhuman, keeping firm her faith and waiting patiently for a great future. Let again once more, the Sun arise on the Eastern horizon ; and, when the morning does come, it will not be ushered in by the rumbling of market carts, and the clatter of commodities, but by the music of faith.

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